

2017

Rhapsode Metaphor: Understanding the Student-Teacher Relationship in Philosophy for Children

Ryan Dougherty

Suggested Citation

Dougherty, Ryan, "Rhapsode Metaphor: Understanding the Student-Teacher Relationship in Philosophy for Children" (2017). *UNF Graduate Theses and Dissertations*. 757.
<https://digitalcommons.unf.edu/etd/757>

This Master's Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Scholarship at UNF Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in UNF Graduate Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of UNF Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [Digital Projects](#).

© 2017 All Rights Reserved

Rhapsode Metaphor: Understanding the Student-Teacher Relationship in Philosophy for
Children

Ryan James Dougherty

Master's Thesis in Applied Ethics and Practical Philosophy

University of North Florida

Advisor: Dr. Sarah Mattice

Committee:

Dr. Aaron Creller and Dr. Bert Köegler

Table of Contents

Introduction

Chapter 1: Philosophy of Education

1.1: Plato and Education

1.2: Dewey and Education

1.3: The Way Forward

Chapter 2: Philosophy for Children

2.1: What comes with the Pillars?

2.2: Application of the Pillars

2.3: Midwife Metaphor

2.4: Combat Metaphor

2.5: Gardening Metaphor

2.6: Friendship Metaphor

2.7: Conclusions on Metaphors so Far

Chapter 3: Rhapsode Metaphor

3.1: Evaluation

3.2: Notes on the Rhapsode

Conclusion

Introduction:

Pens and pencils, paper and pad, books and slideshows, homework and tests, this is how we traditionally understand education. One goes to school, one learns from a teacher, and one then does something with that knowledge—supposedly. To put it like this, however, is laughable. The task of education is paradoxical. How can something so important and endemic to our society be so complicated and the source of so much frustration? The answer to me lies within the very structure of how we traditionally view education. First you learn, then you test, and then you are evaluated for success or failure; this is the path the traditional model of education takes. This thesis argues for moving away from that model.

At times, the teacher is a doctor assisting the ignorant with their illnesses. At other times, he or she is a general, drilling the academic, intellectual skills needed to survive in the world beyond school. Sometimes the teacher is a friend, and sometimes just an observer. The manner that one engages with his or her classroom is often wrapped in some kind of metaphor. The ‘rules’ of the relationship are ascertained from this point, and the interactions structured around these rules. My aim is to explicate how these different kinds of metaphors function in a particular educational system.

In contrast to the traditional model of education, the philosophical merits of Philosophy for Children (P4C) are going to be examined. Just what is Philosophy for Children? The particular variety of Philosophy for Children that is being discussed here finds its roots at the University of Hawai'i. Broadly speaking, this method of pedagogy focuses on inquiry-based learning. By adhering to the Four Pillars of Philosophy for Children¹ a classroom structure is achieved that aims to work beyond the bounds of the typical teacher-student dichotomy by equalizing the

¹ Community, Inquiry, Philosophy, and Reflection. The particulars of these pillars will be discussed later.

power structures. Intellectual safety is an additional component to Philosophy for Children, and understanding what ‘safety’ is, is crucial to understanding several P4C practices. Intellectual safety is, at its most basic level, the idea that the environment that a dialogue takes place is sufficiently safe in such a way that ideas can be expressed without fear of reprisal. Members of the classroom community become co-inquirers, with the expressed intent of participating in safe, intellectual discussions.

The tools and metaphors employed in our pedagogy are reflective of the social and cultural interpretations that ultimately inspire one to ask ‘why’ about this or that topic. What is it that makes thinkers *want* to think about this or that? I do not plan on giving an answer on the exact nature of the psychology involved, but I will endeavor to provide a metaphor that aims to work with the interpreting nature of curiosity and wonderment. In proceeding in this way, perhaps Philosophy for Children can implement a new kind of metaphor in order to expand not just our philosophic horizons, but to, also, refine its Four Pillars, and improve itself as a means by which we understand philosophic pedagogy. The kind of metaphor I am speaking of is encapsulated in understanding of the rhapsode metaphor, and how inspiration related to the idea of philosophic wonderment.

The focus here is on philosophic education, or how ought we teach philosophy? To say we teach philosophy like math does not seem right. Even the traditional model of education claims that philosophy classes are charged with ‘teaching’ critical thinking. While a math teacher may teach the quadratic formula, I cannot reduce ‘critical thinking’ to a formula. So how does Philosophy for Children ‘teach’ philosophy? I argue that we teach philosophy, and any other discipline for that matter, through the metaphors we employ. The view one has of the student-teacher relationship, and what metaphor that relationship seems to embody, gives us a place to

start an inquiry into the philosophy of education. Philosophy for Children employs multiple tools in order to achieve its goals, but I wish to add to this tool kit. In considering ‘inspiration’ we can as pedagogues better act in our teaching of philosophy. In examining the student-teacher relationship, particularly when it is looked at from the perspective of Philosophy for Children pedagogy, we can come to understand the drives and motivations behind philosophic education. In using the pillars of P4C as our guideline we can evaluate different metaphors so that we may better understand which methods of pedagogy ‘succeed’ and ‘fail’ at teaching philosophy. I propose that while the various metaphors have contextual merits it is from what I call the “Rhapsode Metaphor” that the greatest potential for inspiration is derived, and it is from this metaphor that we can best find out how to teach with respect to Philosophy for Children.

Chapter 1: Philosophy of Education

What philosophy of education is being employed, generally speaking, for the purposes of this project? By examining, briefly, two traditional sources, Plato and John Dewey, we will be able to develop some kind of general goal for education, or, at least, a general direction of operation, and, particularly for this project, philosophic education. The questions here are: how ought philosophy be taught, and at what goal is this pursuit aimed? Not only will the discussion shine light on my own educational theory, but it will introduce and clarify some key terms that will be of greater import later on in dissecting the different kinds of teaching metaphors. It should be noted that the focus here is less on the particular theories of Plato and Dewey, and not so much the theory and general philosophic tone derived from them. The historical sources employed here are the *Ion*, *Republic*, and *Theaetetus*, from Plato, and *Democracy and Education*, and *Child*

and Curriculum, from John Dewey. The question remains to be answered, why ought anyone engage in the metaphors at all? I am going to be siding with a theory that is closer to Dewey's theory of education, but by illustrating some issues I take with the Platonic theory I hope to show how my own theory has developed out of these two vastly different sources and how it will provide support for *some* kind of Philosophy for Children.

What is it that we aim to derive from studying philosophy? What is our goal? For me, the goal of philosophic education is two-fold. On one hand, to be without understanding of the philosophic corpus of work would be erroneous. So it would seem that part of the goal of a philosophic education would be to achieve a historic understanding of the works and stories that we traditionally employ in philosophy classrooms. In other words, there needs to be some basis from which we can draw from, not just as teachers, but as students, and inquirers. In learning the myths, legends, and stories of philosophy, that is to say the 'works', 'ideas', and 'dialectics' of the great thinkers, we can develop a reservoir or foundation for further discourse. This first portion of the goal of philosophic education is, however, secondary, and perhaps, for the lack of a better word, subservient, to what we could call a primary directive; the development of the ability that allows one to engage in critical thought and inquiry in such a way that one is not closing oneself off to further inquiry and development. This is what I mean by 'doing philosophy'. To merely recite Plato, or Dewey, is of little use as far as thinking goes. The ability to do something with these ideas is of importance, but all too often do thinkers find themselves restrained by their own thought. One can think critically and importantly, but they can do so *narrowly*.

While it behooves thinkers to specialize, to not have any understanding of other schools of thought, or too dismiss them as 'not philosophy' is a bane on the progress of philosophy overall. To be open in thinking, as opposed to narrow, one engages with thought in such a way that

avenues of inquiry are not eliminated. Each ‘step’ along the educational path should not just move forward, but should also bring with it *potential* for more steps. Yet I use potential here not in a naive sense, to opens ones ideas up to change is to open them up to error, as well as success. I mean potential in a neutral sense, as in “potential for change”. Simply put, I speak of the opposite of stagnation. Ergo, the goal is not just thinking critically about what ones own field or interests may entail, but, rather, the goal also entails the development of one of the most terrifying skills to the traditional pedagogue—the ability to be wrong.

1.1: Plato and Education

The *Theaetetus* employs perhaps the most famous metaphor regarding philosophical education—the midwife metaphor. The purpose of this metaphor is rather straightforward, but the implications of such a metaphor result in a pedagogical method that may be untenable. On this metaphor, the teacher employs no knowledge in his or her teaching, that is to say, he or she does not bestow his or her knowledge upon the student. What the teacher ‘knows’ is irrelevant. The teacher, or midwife as the metaphor puts it, is simply there in the dialogue, or whatever educative setting, in an assistive capacity. The value of the teacher is in the ability to judge and determine the truth of ideas propounded by students: “The highest point of my art is the power to prove by every test whether the offspring of a young man’s thought is a false phantom or instinct with life and truth.”² Clearly the teacher possesses some kind of skill, but this skill is primarily in the evaluation of ideas brought forth by the student. The skill of a teacher is *not* his or her knowledge base, it is the skill that one develops through dialectical reasoning in aiding the birth of new ideas.

² Theat. 150e

Socrates admits that he cannot give birth to wisdom, reiterating his own ignorance. The reason for why he himself is unable to give birth to ideas seems to be a passing comment, but is, in actuality, an immensely important claim, “Heaven constrains me to serve as a midwife, but has debarred me from giving birth.”³ Here I should note that while Socrates speaks of ‘Heaven’, I find that this language may be misleading. The cause of what leads the midwife to be a midwife, or, more accurately put, the cause that encourages the teacher to act in the way he or she does need not be divinely given, as in the case of ‘Heaven’. Instead, the cause for pedagogic action could just as easily be derived from the mundane, everyday experience that we each engage in. Ultimately, the genesis of this claim is amorphous. Socrates' claim here regarding his mission being given from theologic grounds may provide some form of justification for why he may render judgment, but the *kind* of justification seems not to matter as much as their being some justification at all. Regardless, the claim is that students never learn anything *from* the teacher, the midwife, but that students have the ideas within them and these ideas are then *born* into this world.

The main claims here seem to be the ignorance of the teacher regarding subject matter or truth, the teacher's ability to judge, be it divinely inspired, as is the case with Socrates, or inspired by some other means, and the student's ability to produce ideas from within. The particular item being taught, be it ethics, aesthetics, logic, or any subset of what one would typically call ‘philosophy’, would not require any special knowledge on the part of the teacher. Rather, anyone could, at least in theory, possess the capacity to be a teacher. However, this does not seem to be the case in Socrates' claim that the teacher is “constrained” to serve as a midwife. Just as students may or may not have the special kind of proclivity towards wisdom that Socrates attributes

³ Ibid.

to their individual ability to produce viable ideas, the same could be said of the teacher. Simply put, some may be apt to teach, some not, but it is not the training or knowledge that sets them apart, rather it is something else. It is an underestimation to simply say that all these ideas are simply experiential forms of learning. However, that claim is not wrong. Socratic dialogue, Philosophy for Children strategies, and Deweyan experiential learning all are *active* forms of learning--they require willing participants in their pedagogic practices. It is in the mutual cooperation between student and teacher that ideas are understood. Perhaps more aptly put, it is through the cooperation of any two willing agents, regardless of titles such as 'student' or 'teacher'. The encouraging of further ideas, whether or not these ideas are true or false, is in itself an admirable process. The simple attempt at education is valuable, but the exact methods employed can render better or worse results based on the pedagogic quality of said method.

In turning to the *Ion*, we begin our search for an alternative metaphor for education. The reason for this is two-fold. Firstly, the dialogue, while not focused on education, speaks about particular kinds of training that one may receive in his or her field, but, more so than that, it deals with rhapsodes. While this could be derived from several places, choosing to remain within the Platonic body of work was a very conscious decision. By interpreting this dialogue in a way useful for pedagogy, I am aiming to support the idea that interpretation, and inspiration, are not only useful in our understanding of pedagogic practices, but that these tools should be considered crucial in moving forward with new metaphors for the student-teacher relationship.

For those familiar with the *Ion* it may seem like a strange dialogue to use when discussing education. However, the dialogue deals with what the art of the rhapsode is, not education, but if one considers views presented in the *Republic* regarding the place of poets and rhapsodes in a society, then the use of the *Ion* may become clearer. What is the art of the rhapsode? Ion

claims to know all things Homer, the epic poet, and is immensely familiar with all his verses.

The claim that Ion knows the works of Homer is not in question, in fact he seems to know them quite well, but the nature of the rhapsode's art in general is the issue. While Homer speaks on a great many things, Ion knows nothing of these things despite knowing Homer.⁴ From this point the charge is leveled against the rhapsodes, in general, and Ion, in particular:

The gift you have of speaking well of Homer is not an art; it is power divine, impelling you like the power of the stone Euripides called the magnet... This stone does not simply attract the iron rings, just by themselves; it also imparts to the rings a force enabling them to do the same thing as the stone itself, that is, to attract another ring, so that sometimes a chain is formed. For all of them, however, their power depends on that lodestone. Just so the Muse. She first makes men inspired, and then through these inspired ones others share in the enthusiasm, and a chain is formed, for the epic poets... have their excellence, not from art, but are inspired.⁵

The main thrust here is the idea that Ion merely possesses divine inspiration, and not even primarily, but via Homer who himself was inspired by the Muses. Rhapsodists perform the works of poets, if the poets are inspired by Gods or Muses then it follows that rhapsodes have a second-hand inspiration. In other words, the poets interpret the Gods' or Muses' will. To this Ion willingly assents that he is an "interpreter of interpreters."⁶ While this is allowed to be true by Socrates, Ion, and rhapsodes in general, still cannot be said to have an 'art', and so Socrates finally makes overt his issue with the rhapsodes—they know nothing.⁷ They are, to employ the magnet metaphor, simply rings further removed from the lodestone. Rhapsodes, it would seem, are unable to provide an art or knowledge of their own, but they convey the inspiration along the chain of rings.

⁴ *Ion*. 532

⁵ *Ibid.*, 533d-e

⁶ *Ibid.*, 535a

⁷ *Ibid.*, 542a

What, then, makes the rhapsode different than the teacher? Ignoring the particularity of the rhapsode focusing on poetry, let us consider both teacher and rhapsode broadly. Both are rather inept by themselves, they lack the ability to impart new ideas; rather, they are restricted in talking about matters already known or discussed by those who actually possess some form of authority over their field. The midwife and rhapsode, though, are both able to make judgments about some kinds of things. Both received, according to Socrates, some form of inspiration, and therein lies their prowess. Via the Muses the poet is inspired, and then the rhapsode; via some divine source Socrates is constrained as a midwife, and then engages with students. The source is meaningful in the sense that it illustrates the value set of the teacher, but it need not be restricted to one form of inspiration. In both cases stated above, the reliance is on Greek theological notions, but it would seem odd to suggest this for modern pedagogical practices. The linguistic difference here is of some interest, for while Socrates is constrained by his role, the rhapsode is inspired. If inspiration is like a magnet, meaning it can convey its power through other non-magnetic rings, thereby prolonging its own powers beyond itself, then why is it that philosophical education begins in constraint?

When Socrates begins his discussion with Theaetetus, the latter says, with regard to their goal about finding out what knowledge is, “If it depends on my zeal...the truth will come to light.”⁸ This claim is encouraged, with a rather emphatic “Forward!”. Now, if the teacher is bound by some means to his or her role as teacher, and her goal is to simply judge the veracity of ideas put forward, then why would the zeal of a student be encouraged? Inspiration of the student, if the midwife model is true, could not come from the teacher, for that is exactly the issue arising from the rhapsode. Perhaps it is the case that teacher and rhapsode do *not* need to be at

⁸ *Theat.* 148d

odds. They both seem to have similarities that could be employed in particular kinds of situations. Allying the two is beneficial in that it brings together the inspiratory power of the rhapsode, and the impartial judgment of the midwife-teacher.

The diversity of students, those possessing proclivities towards wisdom or education, or not, in Platonic theory, seems to be problematic, but if the favor, or inspiration could derive from a non-divine source, i.e. the rhapsode-teacher, then ideas of quality could still be confirmed. However, there is an issue arising here with how far *back* inspiration goes. If teachers themselves had been inspired by their teachers it would seem that there would be some form of infinite regress, that or there is some originating point of educational, or philosophical, inspiration. This point, however, while valid, is of little practical import. If we are reasonably going to assent to teachers imparting no knowledge, then we can feasibly consent to them having some inspiration from an ultimately unknown and far removed sources. Overall, what is to be taken from the above could be briefly summarized as such: the rhapsode, the interpreter of interpreters, is deserving of some particular attention when it comes to education. While seemingly at odds with Platonic theory, I find that it is here, in the *Ion*, that Philosophy for Children theorists may find their most fruitful tools.

1.2: Dewey on Education

While the theory of Dewey's education cannot easily be condensed, for the sake of time, space, and effort, the discussion will center on some claims made in *Democracy and Education*, namely, the idea "Not only is social life identical with communication, but all communication (and hence all genuine social life) is educative."⁹ Dewey here links society and education in an

⁹ Dewey, John. "Democracy and Education." Project Gutenberg. July 26, 2008. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/852/852-h/852-h.htm> §1.2

inseparable fashion. More importantly, at least for this project, is the relation between communication and education. The literal ability to engage in conversation with others is, in itself, an educative process regardless of intent and content. Consider here that, if one looks all the way back to Plato, some form of dialectic is the basis for ‘education’ and the teacher-student relationship. Seeing as the rhapsode is, despite lacking a true ‘art’, well versed in communicative principles, it would seem, at least by the broad Deweyan conception of education, that the he or she would necessarily be competent at the process of education. Key here though, is the suggestion the the competence is not as teacher or student in particular, but, rather, towards education broadly and some sort of process.

This claim does not get us far though, for it seems to suggest some sort of homogeny amongst learners. While communication can be, and often is, merely some means to an end, the dictation of a current view, or a request of some kind, it is still educative. This is so because of the diversity in society and why Dewey’s claim here is social—for we can, and often do, engage in self-dialogue, but it is only one perspective and is different in its educative powers.

Let us return briefly to the rhapsode. He or she does not simply talk, nor does he or she talk about anything in particular. The rhapsode’s skill lies not just in his or her oratory ability, but also in the nature of the inspiratory chain derived from some previous source. The ability to communicate this inspiration is the mark of a ‘good’ rhapsode. The social aspect of the rhapsode is crucial to understanding what inspiration is, for it is not just in communication, but in *inspired* communication that education seems to take place.

This is just one take on one small part of Dewey’s *Democracy and Education*. While a key text in the history of the philosophy of education, *Child and Curriculum* may be the more important of the two for it addresses the differences between traditional education, Curriculum,

and radically progressive education, Child. In his examination, Dewey finds that neither pole would best suit education. Instead, he seems to propose a more tempered approach than the Child approach, while rejecting most of the approach of the Curriculum. As far as Philosophy for Children is concerned, the difference between the two will prove illustrative of what the goal for education is progressing toward.

Typically, when we are considering education, or schooling, “We see conflicting terms. We get the case of the child vs. the curriculum; of individual nature vs. social culture. Below all other divisions in pedagogic opinion lies this opposition.”¹⁰ The split here could best be summarized by calling attention to the child-adult difference, which, traditionally considered, is for Dewey a distinction between immaturity and maturity. However, there is another way to understand the difference; the difference is one of ‘discipline’, representing the curriculum, as opposed to ‘interest’, being here one’s preferential choice of this or that subject matter, representing the child. The issue here centers around the idea that these two poles cannot be practically reconciled in any traditional pedagogic practice. However, the very existence of something like Philosophy for Children seems to suggest a novel attempt to go beyond this distinction.

What kind of progress can be made with the knowledge of this historical, educational distinction? Consider Dewey’s claim, “What we need is something which will enable us to interpret, to appraise, the elements in the child’s present putting forth and fallings away, his exhibitions of power and weakness, in the light of some larger growth-progress in which they have their place.”¹¹ The idea, at least for a progressive education such as Dewey’s, is to find some manner of operation that will allow educators, despite their perceived difference from the child,

¹⁰ Dewey, John. *The Child and the Curriculum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1902. https://archive.org/stream/childandcurricul00deweuoft/childandcurricul00deweuoft_djvu.txt.

¹¹ Ibid.

to interpret and appraise. Both of these practices should sound familiar by this point, the appraisal of ideas is key to the Platonic understanding of education, and the interpretive aspect is found, in part, in the *Ion*.

The goal of education is something I should directly set out in the open as some kind of standard by which we may make pedagogical decisions. After all, there definitely seems to be some purpose for education, but a goal? I hesitate to posit a final, end goal, but for the sake of simplicity, let us say the goal is proficiency in discourse. My focus here is slightly different though; is there a better way of conducting the process of education? Or, to rephrase, in what manner should the teacher and the student interact? What manner of relationship encapsulates the wants and needs of a modern philosophic education?

1.3: The Way Forward

If we are looking for better ways to conduct ourselves as teachers or as students, then where should we begin? What should be examined? The answer seems to be centered on the kinds of metaphors we use when we talk about education and those involved. The examination of the midwife metaphor is a rather famous example of the kinds of pedagogic tools and postulations that I find to be of the utmost importance.

Why metaphors? Why not just operate on the understanding that the teacher-student relationship is simply what it is in name? Why not be *literal*? Why add in roles and relationships from other fields? Education is typically discussed in a simple, matter-of-fact, manner. The reality of pedagogy, however, is vastly different. Metaphors aim to capture this nuanced reality by elucidating the complex kinds of interactions we have with each other. By not being literal, we are allowing for the ability to interpret and expand our understanding of how we could *possibly*

interact. We do not *literally* treat students as if we were a general and they were soldiers, but the use of the combat metaphor, in this instance, allows us to better understand the types of practices that are being used. When ideas are put into practice, issues start to arise. It is not that education as a practice is difficult or easy, but, rather, the onus seems to rest on the pedagogical tools employed. The different metaphors illustrate this very clearly. By operating under the assumption that education is like midwifery, for example, then educators bring certain practices and biases to the discussion. Likewise, employing a metaphor, in an overt manner, would dictate the relative positions of power between the teacher and student. Metaphors for our educative process are more elucidating than they are obscuring. They illustrate the types of values that are favored, the interpretations of what is valuable, and they also provide a framework from which to conduct further investigations. Additionally, the very existence of numerous teacher-student metaphors should indicate that there are, and will be, many forms, or kinds of education. To posit one or the other as the ‘right’ one would allow us to eliminate the need for the metaphor; at that point it would simply be ‘teacher-student’.

If these issues of pedagogy had been resolved, then all this talk of metaphors would be for naught. Instead, however, educators, students, and society seem to be at a crossroads. The curriculum-child distinction that seems to be pervasive in our thought concerning education is a source of the confusion. The standardization of tests, and the high value placed on these tests, should show which Deweyan pole possesses the current favor, curriculum. The existence of Philosophy for Children, however, suggests the rising of the child-pole. However, this may not be exactly the case, for it seems that Philosophy for Children can be conducted in ways that would not make it fall squarely on the child-side of the Deweyan distinction.

While there are many ways to conduct education. The focus here is going to be directed at two things. Firstly, Philosophy for Children is going to be examined for its potential merit, and use in the realm of philosophic education. This is not to say that it is to be the only way, but, rather, to suggest that it does indeed work, at least to an extent. Secondly, with Philosophy for Children in mind, the gaze will turn to the ability of different kinds of metaphors to encapsulate the ideals set forth by a particular version of Philosophy for Children. A case could be made for a different kind of Philosophy for Children, but, for the sake of clarity, and conciseness, the focus will be on the style of Philosophy for Children put forth by the University of Hawai'i. As far as to what metaphors will be employed, there will be approximately five, and they have been chosen for their diversity, and their either explicit, or implicit use.

Keeping in mind the ideas of education above, one should be able to develop, for his or herself, their own perspective on the issue of education. The aim here is the production of an interpretive project that seeks to reformulate the tools of pedagogy and show how they can either be made new again, or show how they may be used in a different, novel, way. However, there may be some claim made against the types of metaphors and pedagogical practice that I am discussing. They are all based in or around the idea that dialogue between two or more parties is how education, in general, should work. Perhaps a case could be made for self-education, but the idea that education is equivocal to a banking model, meaning that a teacher simply deposits information in a student, seems problematic. Without dwelling long, the banking model of education is opposed to communication and social development.¹² If we are to take the claim that “all communication...is educative” then it follows that any model that seeks to disempower one party or the other does so by means of restricting dialogue and voice. One important note to reiterate,

¹² See Freire, Paulo. “Pedagogy of the Oppressed”. Discussed in more depth later in 3.2.

the focus here is on philosophic education. This is not to say that these models, that restricting critical thinking and the ability to express ones own opinion, could not work for other fields of education. However, I lack to ability to talk about those fields with any degree of command. Dialectic and philosophy have a rather robust history, so it would seem that the relationship between the two is, at least to some extent, inseparable.

The assessment of some metaphors, with respect to Philosophy for Children, will hopefully allow educators of philosophy a better understanding of how to ‘teach’ philosophy. Despite being called Philosophy for Children, there is not a strict age or academic requirement that excludes particular individuals from the discussion. While reasonably new, at least in the style that I will be discussing, Philosophy for Children is already ready for philosophic re-interpretation. Improvements, or refinements, can be made by looking at the relationship between the teacher and the student, and examining the results of the metaphorical structure used.

Chapter 2: Philosophy for Children

If we are to put forth a new metaphor about philosophic education it would seem that we will need some way to assess whether or not a particular metaphor accomplishes the task of encouraging philosophic education. What metrics can we use to discern whether or not a student has become wiser? Philosophy, at least how I understand it, is not about knowing the particulars of a philosopher’s thought, but, rather, it is the discipline concerned with the applications and implications of different lines of thought. In other words, we are less concerned about ‘knowing’ what Plato said in what dialogue, than we are with what we can discuss from those dialogues. Philosophy, it would seem, is not a discipline that encourages the ‘multiple-choice’ style of learning and assessment. Rather, it is the ability for students to reply to open-ended questions

with well thought out, logical responses. This being said, to derive a system of pedagogy in which grading is the main assessment tool seems odd for philosophy. Yet we need some way of discerning if what we are doing in education is *working*. The issue is what we mean by ‘working’. Traditional quantitative methods seem to fail philosophy, and yet, how else can we ascertain the effectiveness of our pedagogic actions? The answer to me seems to rest on what are referred to as the “Four Pillars” of Philosophy for Children.¹³

I am not alone in thinking these pillars may be useful as assessment tools, rather than just words of inspiration from some new philosophic school. In looking at the Four Pillars (Community, Inquiry, Philosophy, and Reflection), it will become clearer as to why these may be used as a metric. Dr. Amber Strong Makaiau has put forth a wonderfully comprehensive evaluators list that ranks the particular strengths and weaknesses of a particular discussion from Advanced to Novice. It is crucial to note that these metrics are assessments of the discourse *as a whole, not of individual students or learners*.

P4C is inquiry-based learning, but this is not just for the students. Rather, according to Dr. Thomas Jackson, “In this place the teacher becomes a co-inquirer in dialogue with the children, rather than their guide or sage.”¹⁴ Additionally, Jackson clarifies what P4C is *not* saying In particular it is not a ‘Socratic Method.’ It certainly involves learning certain skills, but no method.”¹⁵ In becoming a co-inquirer the teacher and the students form a community that is different than most classroom environments.

2.1 What comes with the Pillars?

¹³ From this point forward, for the sake of being concise, Philosophy for Children will be abbreviated P4C.

¹⁴ Jackson, Thomas. *Gently Socratic*. 2006., 5.

¹⁵ Ibid.

Community is the first pillar, and for good reason. For if the community is lacking in some way or another then the other pillars will suffer based on the failings of the community. Makaiau identifies several subsets of Community that can be assessed. To paraphrase, these are: intellectual safety, tools for collaborative inquiry, tools for thinking and reasoning, and ten lenses of philosophic inquiry.¹⁶ I will only briefly discuss what each of these entails, and recommend that those who are curious for a longer break down of Makaiau's ideas ought to turn to the piece itself.

Intellectual safety is not the feeling of comfort. Rather, as put forth by Ashby Butnor, "Intellectual safety is often conflated with the feeling of being comfortable...Even for those experienced in community inquiry, moments of discomfort may be common when engaged in dialogue....Along with moments of discomfort are also these moments of excitement, discovery, affirmation, and achievement. It is these 'aha moments,' and their persistence and reappearance, that make the struggle and pain worthwhile."¹⁷ What this illustrates is that intellectual safety is not the 'feel-good' of everyone agreeing, but, rather, it is the safety in one's ability to disagree. A community is safe so long as it respects differences in opinion and allows for disagreement to occur *in a productive way*. The community enforces itself, and safety occurs only when there is some agreement on the goal of inquiry, in the general sense. How safe the community is, is one metric to take into account.

Tools for inquiry and tools for thinking are similar in the sense that they are both metrics that look at the use of a certain set of potential tools. Perhaps most evident to those familiar with P4C is the community ball. This yarn ball is constructed by and for the class that is using it. This

¹⁶ Makaiau, Amber Strong, PhD. *Philosophical Inquiry Curriculum Guide*. January 2014. Pedagogical Guideline

¹⁷ Butnor, Ashby. "Critical Communities: Intellectual Safety and the Power of Disagreement." *Educational Perspectives: Journal of the College of Education* 44, no. 1&2 (2012): 29-32.

tool for inquiry helps to dictate who is talking. In Makaiau's words, these are "tool[s] for mediating participation (teacher-to-student, student-to-teacher, student-to-student), listening, and intellectual safety..."¹⁸ Simply put, what tools does the community use to enforce its intellectual safety and make sure discussion is maturely maintained? In this case, tools for thinking refer to the Good Thinkers toolkit¹⁹. This tool kit, and others like it, are more about abiding by a ruleset at the personal level. One may ask why the rules are needed if one remember that Jackson said that no method is needed. It is not that any of these *particular* tools need to be used, like the Good Thinker's Toolkit, but that some kind of tool ought be used to facilitate. Can a community function without these tools? Of course, just as I may hammer a nail with a rock, or a lamp, or my hand. Other things work, these tools suggested by Makaiau are just that—suggestions. They have worked, but if there are better ones, then those ought to be used. For example, I know colleagues who are supporters of the Good Thinkers Toolkit I teach it to my classes, yet do not use it myself, at least explicitly. Different tools work better for different people, but the metric looks at tool-usage in general, not particular tools.

The ten lenses of philosophy, according to Makaiau, are "the five sub-fields of philosophy (epistemology, logic, metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics) and the five spheres of social studies (social, political, economic, interaction between humans and the environment, and cultural)".²⁰ Using these different lenses reflects on the community. By implementing more, the discussion can grow in different ways toward different ends. The standard here is *not* to use all the different lenses but, rather, to show an advanced level of performance; according to Makaiau, a community should use more than two. By using at least three lenses a community could engage with the

¹⁸ Makaiau., 6.

¹⁹ See Jackson, 2001.

²⁰ Makaiau, 6.

countless topics. How would this look in practice? Let us consider ethics as our first lens. As the discussion continues about what is right and wrong, we will start discussing the interactions we have with others, bringing in the social lens. To develop the discussion we begin to discuss cultural relativism, thereby bringing in a third lens. By including more lenses, the conversation grows, twists and changes into something more. It becomes meaningful to the community that discusses it because of the lenses with which they are looking at the topic.

Inquiry is the next pillar addressed by Makaiau in her assessment guideline. The subsets of this pillar include: Dialogue in Large-Group settings, Dialogue in Small-Group settings, annotations, memos, Constructed Response, and Evaluation.²¹ For the sake of brevity, I will be grouping them thematically for the sake of efficiency, but they are, so far as Makaiau is concerned, separate points of evaluation.

Large and small group settings involve the actual process of what is happening in the class room. Large group settings deal with the class, or community, as a whole. The goal of the large group is not raucous debate. Any one who has tried to get *all* their students to engage in a class of 30 to 40 has learned the hard way that it is bafflingly difficult to get everyone to say something, let alone something related to the conversation. The large group is, then, responsible not for debating, but for finding the topic of most interest. What is it that has inspired curiosity in the community? In reading Plato's *Republic*, is it the political notions of who ought to rule that interest the class? Or perhaps they are more interested in the treatment of the poets and artists, and wish to discuss the place of art in society? This is the purview of the large group. The small

²¹ Makaiau, 7.

group, on the other hand, is responsible for the actual ‘debate’. By engaging with diverse interlocutors, inquirers succeed at the small group stage so long as they engage with some form of specific question about the general topic brought forth by the large group.

Annotations and memos are different in the sense that they are preparatory for the discussion to be had. The difference between the two deals with what is being worked with. Annotations are done to the philosophic work being engaged with. Traditional pedagogues can rejoice for this allows for homework in P4C! Annotations simply ask that students have read and noted things of interest from a text. Memos deal with the discussion as it happens. Philosophic discourse can be hard to follow for those who have spent *years* doing it. So for a new philosopher to follow a discussion on “what is beauty?” it may be beneficial to keep some notes about the discussion and one’s thoughts, so when the time comes to speak one can remember what it is that they were discussing or what they wanted to say regarding a particular point.

A constructed response is a short, almost outline-like, written evaluation of the argument. The purpose of the constructed response is to evaluate not just whether or not an inquirer paid attention, but to see whether or not they grasp the main thesis of a topic, as well as the arguments for and against the thesis. This is not to ask for a paper or essay however. Rather, it is asking for a few sentences, a paragraph at most, answering “what is the argument here?”

The last subset of inquiry is evaluation. I disagree with Makaiau here on practical grounds. While evaluating the discussion is a key point to P4C. Asking questions such as “Did we maintain safety?”, “were we a good community?”, and “what could we do better?” benefit the community greatly. We can learn from our mistakes, and even improve upon what we did right. I find that this evaluation should be filed under the pillar of Reflection, yet I understand why Makaiau has slotted it here. Evaluating the community is itself a special kind of inquiry—it

is self-inquiry. By assessing what went well and what went poorly, a community can grow and develop. Here is a great place for a pedagogue to suggest some areas of improvement, if the community itself seems to struggle to find them.

The next pillar is often referred to as simply “Philosophy”. However, that actually tells the layman very little about what this pillar is about. Wonderment may be a better word, curiosity even more so, but for the sake of this discussion philosophy will suit us fine, so long as we are clear that this is the pillar that is concerned with the spirit of inquiry, rather than the method of inquiry. The drive, or inspiration, to ask, explore, and engage is what is covered under the purview of this pillar. Like before, Makaiau provides subsets that can serve as evaluative measures: developing questions, planning inquiries, evidence, analysis, and conclusions. Again, for the sake of brevity I will again group these by theme.

Developing questions and planning one’s inquiry go hand in hand. While reading or engaging with some form of philosophic medium an inquirer should endeavor to ask some questions that have some form of importance. This importance could be personally meaningful, or it could be a perceived grander meaning. The point is simply that the text, or what have you, resonate in some way with the reader. After developing these kinds of questions, an inquirer would then go about the planning stage. This includes trying to figure out what kinds of sources would be beneficial to the discussion. Texts, films, and other sources can be used, but this is chosen by the inquirer. What inspires them to engage further, and how those things can be used to answer the questions put forth by the inquirer, is what is focused on here. There is no ‘right’ answer, but Makaiau suggests at least five sources of mixed media to exhibit ‘advanced’ performance in this category.²²

²² Makaiau, 12.

Evidence is the subset that deals with the application of the planning phase. To what degree do those sources found by the inquirer assist in the discussion? How is the argument constructed with sources, and are these sources relevant to the discussion? This is not just the application of sources, but the reasoning as to why they are useful and beneficial to the discussion.

The analysis and conclusions deal with the end stage of the immediate inquiry. After posing a question, formulating how one might answer it, and gathering several sources, an inquirer ought to analyze the merits of the sources. What makes the cut? Do these sources affect the thesis? Do they form discernible categories that assist others in understanding one's point? Analysis can benefit greatly from the community. Peer reviewing allows one to see missed opportunities, or erroneous assumptions about particular sources. Simply put, the more that can engage with the analysis the more different ideas may arise. These differing ideas will impact the concluding remarks one might have. The conclusion here, of the pillar of Philosophy, is the production of some scholarly piece of work providing one's own insight on a topic. Taking the wonderment and curiosity that started the whole process, and solidifying it into a concrete argument for, or against whatever topic. To successfully do this is to renew the cycle of wonderment, for one's new work will, in turn, encourage others to respond with their own ideas.

The last pillar to be discussed is Reflection. This pillar is more obvious than the others, it deals with the ability to assess what one is doing with regard to the other pillars. In fact, the evaluation process is rooted in the pillar of Reflection. By dividing the pillar into subsets, we have discussion points like before: evidence-based inquiry, personal inquiry, process reflection, metacognition, multiple perspectives.

Evidence based reflection is the short analysis of a quote, passage or something similar. This is not necessarily a question, but more is a more in depth look at the source; more so than

what an annotation entails mentioned above. When investigating, this form of reflection allows an inquirer to prepare themselves for discussions in the future. Additionally, it shows engagement in a topic. Upon reviewing one's evaluations of a topic, a theme may emerge illustrating what it is about a topic that truly encourages the inquirer to act.

Personal reflection is the examination of one's own curiosity. Why is it that such and such a topic causes a sense of wonder? Why is *this* important *to me*? The personal reflection is done with the goal of trying to bring to light any personal aspects that may benefit the topic. Additionally, one may be able to see what kinds of biases are brought to the discussion through self-reflection. One's history, culture, and interactions can all be taken into account here. It seems to me that personal reflection is treated by Makaiau as a minor topic, yet, if we are to understand the nature of wonderment and curiosity, then our examination of our personal interests could illustrate some of the qualities of inspiration in general.

Process reflection examines the structure and quality of the argumentative process. In other words, how well did one develop their argument? Not in the sense of "did it convince me?" but in the sense regarding the attempt at following guidelines in relation to evidence and conclusions. In reflecting on process, questions are asked such as "Is there a clear thesis?", "Are there examples and counter-examples?", "Does the conclusion logically follow?", and the like. This may sound basic, but in reflecting one can improve the philosophic style and coherence of the work in question. In looking at the process one must, inevitably, think about thinking. By reflecting on metacognition, Makaiau says that inquirers will come to realize how what they have done effects things not even discussed.²³ In understanding why thinking went the way it did, perhaps some inference can be discerned about thinking in general. If so, then it follows that one would

²³ Ibid.

be more apt to reflect upon other kinds of situations that may only be tangentially related to the current discussion topic.

Multiple perspectives is a rather self-explanatory metric. Did the inquirer use perspectives other than his or her own? Looking back to community, if the community is strong, and intellectually safe, then there should be no issue in articulating perspectives that are not one's own. For Makaiau, this appears to ring true as the 'Advanced' requirements are listed as 'more than one other perspective'.²⁴ Not a hard number to achieve, however this is in the understanding that there is a community of inquirers contributing their own perspectives in small scale discussions about whatever topic is being investigated by the class.

The above is a paraphrase of a more in-depth analysis put forth by Makaiau. While it would be beneficial to discuss these pillars in more in greater detail, what we are more concerned with at the moment is whether or not the pillars can be used in such an evaluatory manner. It appears they can. The pillars work for P4C, yet, with some tinkering, they could likely work in other systems of pedagogy. Seeing as our concern is about the metaphors employed while teaching philosophy, it seems that these pillars will provide a suitable foundation from which we may measure the viability of different metaphors with regard to their potential to capture *all* the pillars. If a metaphor fails at some pillar, is it necessarily not worth our time? I hesitate to say so. This metric is not my own, and, if we are to be good practitioners of P4C, particularly if we are to follow Jackson's lead, the method is amorphous. While these are all tools to be implemented in order to gauge success, to eliminate a metaphor because it fails to perfectly encapsulate the spirit of the pillars would be rather odd. The pillars themselves can be improved upon by seeing how they evaluate different kinds of metaphors regarding pedagogy.

²⁴ Makaiau, 17.

2.2 Application of the Pillars

The number of metaphors we could feasible concoct are countless, limited only to the imagination. The sheer quantity of them is staggering, and endeavoring to apply P4C pillars to all of them would take countless hours—if it could even be done. For the sake of this project, we will focus on only a few more, philosophically popular metaphors. I previously talked about the Midwife metaphor put forth by Socrates in the *Theaetetus*, here we will evaluate whether or not it meets the demands of the modern community of inquiry developed by P4C. While I previously expressed issues with the metaphor, this was done to illustrate where the genesis of the project is found. However, I was only putting forth my curiosity on the manner.²⁵

From there we will look at what we can call the combat metaphor. The popularity of this metaphor can best be attributed to the favoring of results-based education. The metaphor puts forth, within its own framework, conditions of success and failure. These clear-cut conditions are easy to follow. Easy in the sense that pass and fail can be doled out with a glance at some quantitative formula. In one sense, this metaphor may be the most prevalent. Not in the overt sense, but implicitly. The drive toward clear success, the fear of failure, and the imparting of knowledge from the teacher to the student, are all qualities that can be attributed to this metaphor, and seem to be rather common pedagogic practices. Through its rigor, this metaphor facilitates rote learning. The regurgitation of ‘fact’ is not a side effect of this practice, but rather it is the primary intent.

There are some metaphors that seem to encapsulate P4C directly. On one hand we have what I will call the gardening metaphor. The gentle grooming and encouragement of the students

²⁵ Familiarity with the pillars should illustrate my reasoning for this.

is, for the most part, from interference. Whereas the combat metaphor is illustrative of what Dewey would call curriculum, the gardening metaphor is representative of what he calls the child. Assessment here can be problematic, but, in light of the pillars, perhaps this metaphor is what is intended by P4C practitioners. The non-interference with students allows for curiosity to run free, and with freedom surely students will learn much. This is unknown to me, but the pillars will at least give us some point from which we may see just how useful this metaphor is for teaching philosophy in particular.

Perhaps a non-traditional metaphor of pedagogy, but, what I call the friendship metaphor, may be the least metaphorical of all the metaphors when we are talking about P4C. However, what friendship is and how it works in this particular context is rather specific. The fact that the friendship metaphor may be literal could cause some problems. Not problematic in the sense that it will be formulated in such a way that will conflict with the pillars, but because it is restricted *within* the pillars. It seems to work, so far as I can tell, but in its literal application it fails the dream of P4C.

To round out the metaphors, I wish to propose one of my one invention. For the sake of clarity we can call it the rhapsode metaphor. The genesis of metaphor is within the *Ion* which we have already talked about briefly. The purpose of this new metaphor is to attempt to focus pedagogy around the ideas of wonder, curiosity, and inspiration—in other words it exalts the pillar of Philosophy. I believe that in looking at the nature of inspiration and wonderment, this metaphor puts forth a different take on the pillars and P4C in general. It seeks to improve upon the tools brought forth by P4C, and bring those tools to the community, be it the classroom or the community at large.

2.3 Midwife Metaphor

The midwifery metaphor is rather popular in philosophical circles, and seems to be rather agreeable when it is applied to the teaching of philosophy. After all, it finds its roots with, arguably, the most famous western philosopher, Socrates. The metaphor goes in such a way that the teacher, considered as midwife, is there to assist in the ‘birth’ of knowledge that the student, the pregnant one, already has within them. While it may be the case that a midwife is not needed during a birth, Socrates makes a point of saying, “Is it not, then, also likely and even necessary, that midwives should know better than anyone else who are pregnant and who are not?”²⁶ What is key here is the suggestion that the teacher would be able to identify those pregnant with knowledge and those who are not. For example, “In some cases...then they do not seem to me to be exactly pregnant...and I have handed over many of them to Prodicus, and many to other wise and *inspired* men.”²⁷ Any serious thinker of philosophy has at one point or another encountered the phenomenon of realizing that a particular line of thought may not be exactly usefully or solvable at the current time. These are the types of ideas Socrates seems to be alluding to. While the idea is perhaps appealing and seemingly beneficial for future discussion, the idea is, in actuality, unfounded or untenable—simply put, it is not suitable to be dwelled on for it either lacks factual support or is otherwise lacking in some manner deemed by the teacher. As Socrates continues his discussion with Theatetus, he makes a remark that I wish to end this overview on, “when I have examined any of the things you say, it should prove that I think it is a mere image and not real, and therefore quietly take it from you and throw it away, do not be angry as women are when

²⁶ Theat. 149c

²⁷ Ibid., 151b, Emphasis added

they are deprived of their first offspring.”²⁸ As the midwife, or teacher, Socrates reminds his student to not be mad with him after he has made an assessment of the potentiality of the idea to be rendered through birth. Not all ideas, in this framework, are worth pursuing. These ideas are to be judged by the midwife and either disposed of, or sent elsewhere.

The judgment in this Platonic theory rests with the teacher. This, I find, is problematic for the very reasons poets are discouraged and banished in the *Republic*; their potential to sway students, listeners, in this or that way is immense. Despite not imparting any knowledge unto his students, Socrates claims that his cause to encourage the development of his ‘students’, has some form of backing. However, to have an ignorant mass, as the populace is referred to briefly in book X of the *Republic*, have their ideas confirmed or rejected by a teacher claiming to impart no knowledge, but rather claiming to have the authority to judge other’s ideas, is to suggest a situation in which, despite the students being the ones who ‘know’, they are the ones who are also at the mercy of the ignorant teacher whose authority comes not from knowledge but from some other source.

While Socrates says that some students will produce ideas that are true and some will not, he renders this judgment based on his abilities as a judge, or midwife. While Socrates attributes this skill to his divine inspiration, the truth of the matter is that Socrates is, at a fundamental level, appealing to some authority beyond himself. For our purposes, it matters not if this authority is divine or not, but rather that it is an authority that would allow a teacher-as-midwife to make proper pedagogical judgments. The truth or usefulness of a student’s idea in an educational dialogue may not necessarily reflect the ‘divine favor’, or the academic potential. For, after all, a

²⁸ Ibid., 151c

good student can have a bad idea, and vice versa. Despite having some claim to pedagogic authority, the midwife imparts no knowledge. How is it that a mass of people can be educated if the leader of the education is himself, or herself, unable to impart knowledge?

Let us consider the question at hand; Does this metaphor work? Ought we, as teachers of philosophy, act as the midwives to our students? The aspect of community does seem to be there, for the midwife has lived a life of experience, had births of his or her own, and, while now ‘barren’ as Socrates describes himself, has done so all within a community. In forming a new “community” the midwife seeks out the potential pregnancies, or they seek out the midwife, and then the inquiry may begin. However, it is of note that the midwife does maintain a position of power over the pregnancy, for it is from her judgement that the viability of an idea, or lack thereof, is determined. While the teacher still has some form of control over the community, it is not like the controls Socrates exerts over the pregnancies. The teacher in P4C keeps the community safe, and does not dismiss ideas as not worth talking about, but rather certain conversations may be squelched in the name of safety—if and only if the community does not do so on its own accord. While the experimental similarity is there, i.e. the midwife once did this as well and birthed an idea, this community presents a faux equality. While seemingly coming ‘down’ to the level of the pregnant student, the midwife must, necessarily, maintain a certain authority that comes from experience, and it is only within that authority that one’s midwifery is to be judge of good or bad. In acting, the midwife tells others, the students, what is to be kept and dismissed. While the students may object, they are informed, as seen above, not to be upset, for it is in their best interest—and interest told to them by the midwife in power, i.e. the teacher. Students here are in-

formed if they are or are not safe, because the midwife somehow knows better than the community that she professes to be a part of! Acting in such a way, the midwife excludes his or herself from the community and, therefore, should not be able to express any power over the safety of it.

Let us say that the pregnant one passes muster and is now being subjected to the inquiry of the midwife. Does this metaphor allow for the continuation of inquiry? In other words, does this necessarily allow for the co-inquirers that are endemic to P4C? To an extent, but as seen previously, the midwife maintains the power to shutdown a line of inquiry ‘in the best interest’ of the student, or the community—all on the assumption that the midwife is a perfectly impartial judge. Tangents, asides, and ruminations are thwarted at the will of the teacher. Inquiry only continues so long as the midwife sees the potential for ‘birth’ in it, and this potential is only understood through the midwife’s past experiences. A new experience, therefore, may be quashed for the simple reason that the midwife does not recognize its viability—it is never given a chance. In other words, the ignorance of the midwife may result in suppression of knowledge coming from the student. Different perspectives can be tossed aside if they do not ‘fit’ with the midwife’s understanding of inquiry.

Wonder, or philosophy, likewise suffers at the hands of the midwife. For curiosity may be stifled under the watching, ‘caring’ eye of the teacher. Avenues for exploration are demolished, and safe routes the midwife can recognize are more likely to be taken. While the routes taken may still provoke curiosity and wonderment, they do so not innately, but as a side effect of the student’s personal wonder. That is to say, if the student has curiosity about a subject and the teacher also does, or finds said subject ‘worthy’ of curiosity, then it is supported. While, on the other hand, a different curiosity, a different perspective, may be brushed aside. This leads to the creation of traditions of thought where thinkers support themselves along a genealogy of similar

thinkers. Midwives support pregnancies, and those pregnancies go on to midwife based on their previous experiences. In a sense, the ‘right’ way to do things is passed down, while deviations can be controlled in the name of viability. The habits and curiosities of one may be passed down and developed as ‘beneficial’, while other ideas are systematically quashed as they arrive. The lack of knowledge, meaning the lack of *all* knowledge, may limit the midwife. In not realizing the path a student may or may not be taking, based on assumptions about what can and will carry to term, a midwife may end a perfectly viable line of inquiry.

The ability to reflect is still here, for both the midwife and the pregnant one have the ability to look back at the experience and make some judgments about it, seeing whether or not they would wish it again. However, this would be a breaking of the community, an internal reflection seems odd for this metaphor. For the point of Socrates’ argument is the fact that the midwife has some set of skills that the pregnant one does not. So how could the pregnant one possibly know how to critique the midwife? Well, he or she did just give birth herself, so it follows that they now would have the knowledge and ability to critique the midwife. The lack of ability to reflect on each other is a symptom of the power structure exhibited in the midwife metaphor. On the other hand, the relationship is not horizontal, rather it dictates a certain vertical power structure. While the lack of experience would be an issue, it seems odd to suggest that the student would reflect on the teacher’s skills by some external metric. For the kinds of skills one would assume of a teacher are only known from the teacher in question that helped to deliver the idea; that idea being the assessment *of* the teacher. Simply put, the only standard to which the student can hold their teacher, at least until more experience is had, is the teacher themselves.

While the midwife metaphor may be of some use to philosophic discussion, after all the ideas are not ‘implanted’ by the teacher but, rather, only drawn out by them, it would seem that,

as far as evaluating it from the perspective of P4C and its pillars, this metaphor falls short on several fronts. I would not endorse it, personally. While several could be picked in order to dismiss this metaphor, or, rather, dismiss this metaphor as it stands currently, the part that should take the focus is the oddness surrounding the community and the power structures therein. There is a distinct difference between the barren teacher and the fertile student, and, while they interact, the community does not continue on past the birthing. An idea, once brought to fruition, is treated as either done and completed, or as something that can be fostered by the student without further guidance. It is theirs after all, why would the teacher meddle further. Well, it would seem that the child would be left to their own devices, and they could act with this new idea in such a way that is harmful to further intellectual development. For example, the idea could be ‘there ought be a division of labor’ and this idea could be brought to bear and the student may ruminate on it by themselves free from the midwife. This idea could lead to the segregation of classes of people, if this student were to enter high office. Perhaps they would find the division of labor to be most evident in the creation of a slave class who could do ‘lesser’ forms of labor, and an intellectual class which was excused from these menial labors. While this is how Ancient Greece operated to a certain extent, and this is typically not what is meant by ‘division of labor’ now. Without guidance, without community, the idea can run rampant and turn from a useful idea into something crippling. Intellectual safety is not the concern of the midwife, and that is perhaps its greatest failing. Hence why I cannot reasonably recommend it for P4C.

2.4 Combat Metaphor

Broadly speaking, the combat metaphor is one in which there are two forces opposed to one another, and at some point there is to be conflict—hence the name. This being said, the student is training for this impending conflict, they are commanded and ordered in such a way as to achieve victory. Through rigor and discipline, ‘victory’ is achieved. While there may not be as clear cut of an example, such as the case with Socrates likening himself to a midwife, the metaphor itself is explained, in depth, by Sarah Mattice in her book, *Metaphor and Metaphilosophy: Philosophy as Combat, Play, and Aesthetic Experience*. To summarize the nature of the combat metaphor regarding the participants, “Whatever their relationship might have been, on a combat metaphor participants are pitted against one another, adversaries or soldiers for different camps.” And further, on the goals of the metaphor, “They seek to think strategically, to outwit or outmaneuver their opponent(s), with the ultimate aim of securing victory.”²⁹ Teachers then, if we are to use this metaphor, are to prepare their students for what is to come. Students, in turn, see their intellectual survival at stake, they now have *enemies* who wish to impose philosophical and intellectual harm upon them. Class is now not the place to forge friendships, rather, it is the sparring ground where the philosophically strong beat the weak. The goal is to achieve victory, and the victor is the one with the strongest truth, so the teacher prepares the student for this. In Mattice’s explanation of the victory being the one, in this metaphor, with the strongest truth, she says, “The idea that the truth will win out in the end...translates in the context of the combat metaphor to the idea that a philosopher who can best another in philosophical combat...has the truth or a grasp on the truth in a way her opponent did not.”³⁰ To train one’s students in such a way would entail that the teacher wishes for them to have the best possible tools, or weapons as the case may be, for the impending battle. Yet this metaphor may have different articulation, what has

²⁹ Mattice, Sarah A. *Metaphor and Metaphilosophy*. S.l.: Lexington Books, 2017. 22

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 24

been presented here is just a broad version of the metaphor to be applied to any number of situations.

In times of war, conflict, and adversity, it is often the case, or at least so far as romantic historians would have it, that communities rally together in order to heed the call to battle and work together towards victory. While the drive toward a common goal develops a kind of community, the question remains if this is the community that we want when talking about P4C. This metaphor fails to deliver a community in line with the needs and goals of P4C. There are two different situations in which the community suffers. Firstly, the community is bound together, but only so far as they have reached a kind of concord that pits ‘us’ against ‘them’. Perhaps this is a rivalry between classes, perhaps between schools, perhaps between ideologies. Whatever the case, the unity of the classroom community would require a common opponent, and to try to understand the opponent could be seen as a kind of intellectual treason. The general, or drill instructor, tells them of this enemy and then they prepare to go beat said enemy. While this may sound tenable, the fact of the matter is that this only results in factions and insurmountable gulfs in intellectual attitudes—we win, or they win. There is, traditionally speaking, a victor and a defeated, there is no interplay between the two for growth. The combat metaphor becomes a situation in which cross-communication is undertaken as a kind of espionage: if we know our enemy, we can easily beat them.

While this is enough to show the non-philosophical nature of the traditional combat metaphor, there is a more direct example. If there is no common enemy, then what is the class being trained for? The answer is quite simple and terrifying: everyone is the enemy, *I* need to protect *myself*. While it is safe to say that self-preservation is probably something we ought to engage in, to use it in the combat metaphor is to make a grave mistake for discourse in general. In Mattice’s

words, “The combat metaphor, although a metaphor of/for thinking, encourages us to view one another as enemies, and this has very real world consequences for the possibility of productive civil discourse.”³¹ These consequences are the immediate and constant fear of conflict, betrayal, and defeat. If everyone is to be an enemy, there is no pause for rest. The creation of factions for the sake of factions does not seem to benefit a philosophical education. As a last note, this metaphor explicitly requires a commander or general. There is one who is very clearly in power over the rest, and their word is to be treated as law. Simply put, they teach *to* the class the types of things that are valuable.

Inquiry suffers a rather odd fate at the hands of the combat metaphor. It exists. In fact, creativity may be cherished, but the creative aspect of inquiry is driven towards one goal: victory. Inquiry, then, is engaged with and facilitated so far as it serves to reach a particular goal. Those lines of inquiry that may be found to be of less beneficial nature or that will not help the achieving of victory, can be put aside as things to be studied after conflict. But, in this combat metaphor, the state of nature is antebellum, that is to say the war is not yet here, we are preparing for it. So the postbellum time may not come, for the combat metaphor survives only in the continuation of conflict and adversity; finishing only upon total victory.

What becomes of intellectual safety in the combat metaphor? While it is not a state of ‘comfort’, safety entails the ability for inquirers to voice opinions without fear of repercussion of prejudice. The combat metaphor works on a principle of fear, not of wonderment. To encourage preparations for combat is to instill the fear of defeat, of being *wrong*, and this prospect is distinctly unphilosophical. After all it is typically joked about that philosophers, if they know anything, “know that they know nothing”. To engage in philosophy is to allow for the possibility of

³¹ Ibid., 40.

being wrong, but when the fear of being wrong is the *exact* thing trying to be instilled in a student by a teacher, then philosophical discussion cannot be had. No student would wish to be wrong, but, rather, they would listen carefully to their drill instructor and hope that they possess the abilities to be ‘right’ and triumph over their opponents.

When considering the relationship the combat metaphor has with the pillar of reflection a rather interesting idea arises. Despite the power difference between the teacher and the students, if the goal is truly to ‘win’ then reflection would definitely have a place. For to ‘regroup’ and ‘re-assess’ would behoove the general of the class as well as the soldier-students. For the teacher, the reflection and feedback from students shows their aptitude and ability to follow orders. Additionally the teacher may see the flaws in his or her own plan, and to send ones ‘soldiers’ in with a flawed plan would not be conducive to victory. However, this is suggesting a dialogue and willingness on the part of the teacher to be open to critique. While the teacher may be able to deliver a reflection upon the students and the ‘plan’ in general, he or she may find that the ‘plan’ or method was suitable and it was the students who were at fault. It was in their incompetence or laziness that victory is lost. This argument, however, could be applied to most, if not all, forms of reflection. For it seems as if reflection only works when those partaking in it are willing to listen as well as provide reflective commentary. The last thing of note, for the time being, is the fact that the students, despite being in a weaker power position than the teacher, find their true power *in* reflection. It is here, in this pillar, that students are able to be insubordinate, not for ill or malicious means, but because they find their leader, their general, to not be acting with their best interest in mind. If they wish to have victory, they would do well to find a new, *better* general who is more apt to lead them. Yet, herein lies another problem. The quality of a leader, or general,

can be obfuscated by their charisma. A leader may be able to rally his troops, to convince his soldiers to die for him, but if his tactical strategy is lacking, then the general of this combat metaphor will have his army annihilated.

Overall, the combat metaphor, in its current victory driven, or ‘results driven’, state is not viable as a philosophic teaching tool, despite what traditional pedagogues may think. One cannot drill ethics the same way one may rehearse multiplication tables. While it may possess some appeal in its ability to structure and bestow power to some, it ultimately is unphilosophic in its combative nature. While discourse is conducted between two parties, it is, philosophically speaking, conducted for the goal of better understanding, whereas the interplay of ideas is absent in the combat metaphor; it is *my* idea against *your* idea in an epistemological cage-match. Lastly, the notion that the combat metaphor is driven by fear and anxiety, rather than awe and wonderment seems to suggest a different kind of tradition, different than philosophy and less open to the possibility that one may be wrong or the idea that one “does not know”—for to not know is to be defeated here.

2.5 Gardening Metaphor

While the gardening metaphor may be implicitly used, particularly by those who side with what Dewey calls ‘the Child’, the origin of the metaphor, at least in an explicit sense, is elusive. Not to say that it does not exist, but it is just not the subject of modern western inquiry. The rendition of the gardening metaphor that I wish to articulate has its roots in Confucianism, particularly with the thinker Mengzi.³² To illustrate, consider the following anecdote:

There was a man of Song, who was grieved that his growing corn was not longer, and so he pulled it up. Having done this, he returned home, looking very stupid, and said to his people, "I am tired to-day. I have been helping the corn to grow

³² Romanticized as the more familiar “Mencius”.

long." His son ran to look at it, and found the corn all withered. There are few in the world, who do not deal with their passion-nature, as if they were assisting the corn to grow long. Some indeed consider it of no benefit to them, and let it alone - they do not weed their corn. They who assist it to grow long, pull out their corn. What they do is not only of no benefit to the nature, but it also injures it.³³

This illustrates a clear failure in gardening. Anyone with a rudimentary understanding of agriculture should understand that one cannot pull on a crop in order to accelerate its growth. Even in the best case the crop would be maimed, and in the worst case it would be killed. However, this is not the entirety of the metaphor. In what way does this relate to education? In the following discussion Mengzi introduces his rather famous idea of the "Four Sprouts".³⁴ The exact nature of the sprouts is of secondary concern for us however. Instead, the concern is about the nature and development of these sprouts:

When men, having these four principles, yet say of themselves that they cannot develop them, they play the thief with themselves, and he who says of his prince that he cannot develop them plays the thief with his prince. Since all men have these four principles in themselves, let them know to give them all their development and completion, and the issue will be like that of fire which has begun to burn, or that of a spring which has begun to find vent. Let them have their complete development, and they will suffice to love and protect all within the four seas. Let them be denied that development, and they will not suffice for a man to serve his parents with.³⁵

Mengzi's main claim here is that individuals have these four main 'sprouts', or ideals, within themselves. By suggesting that development can occur naturally, Mengzi is making a rather important claim about education here. Eventually the metaphor is completed with Mengzi writing

³³ Mengzi. "Gong Sun Chou." In *The Works of Mencius*, translated by James Legge. Clarendon, 1985.

<http://ctext.org/mengzi/gong-sun-chou-i>. 1.2

³⁴ Seeds, Sprouts, Beginnings are used in different translations. Sprouts is used here to maintain the metaphor more clearly.

³⁵ Mengzi, *Gong Sun Chou*. 1.6

about these qualities, “if it receives its proper nourishment, there is nothing which will not grow. If it lose its proper nourishment, there is nothing which will not decay away...”³⁶

Now that we have all the pieces, what exactly is this metaphor saying? In endeavoring to ‘teach’, pedagogues typically encourage progress by prodding or pulling, yet if students are to be likened to the sprout, then pulling them to ‘grow’ is going to result in a form of academic hamstringing. Pressured to perform on state issued tests, and told their collegiate future depends on a test score, students are yanked to a higher level. Will some succeed? Of course, but just as many suffer at the hands of the ignorant gardener. However, the opposite does not help students either. Letting crops survive purely on their own *may* work, or you may just end up with a field of dead tomatoes. Crops require a certain level of care and nourishment to survive. Water, sunlight, fertilizer, and the like are all things that contribute to the development of the crops, yet this is only arranging the conditions for growth—the actual growing lies within the innate qualities of the crops themselves.

The pillar of community, when used to evaluate, generates a few interesting aspects of the gardening metaphor. First, and perhaps most obviously, there is a gardener, the teacher, and there are crops, the students. This seems to suggest a similar power structure to that of the combat metaphor, but this is not the case. Whereas the combat metaphor creates an environment rooted in fear, and obedience, the gardening metaphor focuses on care. Additionally, despite having a position of power, this power is the power to enforce *safety*. Consider those kinds of plants that have vines. If the class room, i.e the field, is diverse, then there are sure to be some vine bearing plants. These plants grow, reach, and climb. Sometimes they do so at the expense of other plants; their vines, which allow them to reach high, allow them to strangle and contort less

³⁶ Mengzi. "Gaozi." Translated by James Legge. In *The Works of Mencius*. Clarendon, 1985. <http://ctext.org/mengzi/gaozi-i>.

ambitious crops. Just as some students will support their success with the dismantling of others arguments. This does not seem to be a safe environment: what could the strawberry do about the tomatoes vines? On its own it can do little to protect itself, not because of some failing of the strawberry, but because its nature is non-invasive. Thankfully, the gardener is able to provide a stick for the tomato to vine around, freeing the strawberry and allowing them both to grow, freely and fairly.

Safety can be easily established in the gardening metaphor, but the community as a whole may not be perfect. What benefits one may be harmful to another. While P4C encourages a diverse environment, a diverse field begins to have complications. How much water? How much sunlight and shade? What kind of fertilizer? What about pests and predators? In their diversity, plants need different things to develop. While one may require copious amounts of water, others may need very little. While all plants need sunlight, not all are sunflowers and love the sun, others may be more delicate mint plants requiring some amount of shade to survive and flourish. How is the gardener viably going to care for *all* the plants equally? Typically agriculture is done with a focus on a particular crop, or group of crops. However, this critique may be unfair, after all no matter the classroom, different students work better with different conditions. The issue, then, is not with this broad claim, but the lack of any real answer to it. Additionally, a diversity of plants would all have different end goals in mind, treating a class as a mere collection of individuals rather than a community of inquirers does not seem to be in accord with the *idea* of community. While there is some form of shared goals, these goals are factionalized. Some want one thing, others wish for another. In banding together, sub-communities could form, fracturing the classroom-garden community as a *whole*. Could it work? Yes, I believe so, but I believe that it would also be chaotic, with little or no order as to who is doing what or for what reason.

Inquiry, on the other hand, seems to be in a rather weird position. This metaphor speaks little about the ability for the crops to explore. Rooted in the same field, the exploration are necessarily tied together. Yet, the manner in which they grow could be in vastly different directions, and the gardener has no control over this. Tomatoes vine and reach higher and higher, carrots are quite content to grow downwards. Higher is not necessarily better, and lower is not necessarily worse, but how can a gardener influence or help guide a discussion in which opposites are so prevalent?

It may be the case that the gardening metaphor's great boon and bane are its potential for diversity. Diversity breeds perspectives, and yet, maintaining some coherent discussion when all the different kinds of plants are doing different things would be problematic to say the least. The solution that springs to mind for me is one of division. The gardening metaphor's issue with focus and community, and thereby the chaos of its inquiry, may be 'solved' by implementing it at a later educative stage. Consider an introduction to philosophy course at a university. If I work on the assumption that I have only strawberries, then the pineapples may grow upset. The difference in majors may be akin to the difference in kinds of crops. While not all philosophers are the same, in the way strawberries and apples may be different, they are all still similar in the way fruit is similar. I may personally find the growing of strawberries to be my area of expertise, but I understand, at least, what fruit in general requires. On the other hand, if my field is composed of legumes, tubers, leafy greens, and perhaps a tree or two, it suddenly become complicated for me to address the particular needs of the crops. I can nourish them to the best of my ability, but my own experience as a strawberry is going to influence how I implement nourishment. It seems the issues with inquiry are centered around the idea of nourishment for that inquiry. By favoring one kind of crop or the other, inquiry for some is suppressed. If we start implementing the gardening

metaphor at high levels of learning, allowing students to truly develop their interests with a gardener who knows what kind of nourishment will actually help them, then there seems to be less issues.

Philosophy, or wonderment, appears to be a strong pillar for the gardening metaphor, but it may actually suffer in the same ways the previous pillars did. The aim of nourishment is to encourage the natural inclinations of the crop in question. The curiosity, the growing, and reaching of the plants are the metaphorical outgrowths of curiosity. This is not without problems, however. The first step may be the hardest. The growing of the crop does not seem problematic, but the spourting of the seed may be. If the conditions are not right *to begin with* then the seed never sprouts, and without the sprout there can be no further growth. This initial spurt of curiosity could perhaps be understood as the student's natural inclination toward this or that subject area of learning. From personal experience, I was never a fan of mathematics. So when I found myself in a college calculus class I never endeavored to express curiosity or mathematic growth—I was there for the grade, and there was little that could change that. On the other hand, I took a course on philosophy of religion and promptly switched my major to philosophy. What kind of seed a student is, and where they will sprout is unknown. Required courses at the college level provide a testing ground to see whether a student grows best in a greenhouse, sunny field, or hydroponic enclosure. The results of the experimental planting could be wondrous, or catastrophic. I have known bright students who fail out of college on required courses related in no way to their discipline. In order to create well-rounded students though, seeds are forced into fields which may be hazardous to their survival. P4C aims to be for everyone though, so the method by which the gardening metaphor encourages philosophy and wonderment may be problematic.

Again the issue, to me, centers around the diverse needs of a student body, and how the gardening metaphor handles issues of diversity.

Reflection within the gardening metaphor has issues as well. While the end result of the crops can be determined at a glance, it would seem. The application of reflection it is rarely this easy. While I can look at strawberries and determine whether or not they are healthy and ready for consumption, I struggle to do the same with students. Success and failure in the philosophy classroom is less clear-cut. The gardening metaphor seems to need some way to ascertain whether the crops can go to market—in a manner of speaking. How ought we do this? Could the pillars be used within the metaphor to examine the crops? Let us consider an apple. Did this apple work within the community, and was it intellectually safe to its compatriots in the field? Truthfully, it would seem that the success or failure of the apple has little to do with the turnip, and the lettuce. In this case, community is a wash, and little can be said about it. Inquiry seems to work though, we can see the growth of the apple, how large, how ripe, it has gotten. We can see just *how* the nourishment brought it from tiny seed to tree to flower, and finally, to fruit. We can reflect on that process easily it would seem, and the same goes for philosophy. Reflecting on the reflection of the apple is problematic for logistical reasons, seeing as this example is hypothetical and metaphorical, I cannot say much about the nature of this meta-reflection. Self-evaluation is possible, yet the apple will be evaluating from the apple perspective, and this evaluation may not be accurate for other crops in the field. Therefore there may be some unforeseen problems there. Additionally, as stated previously, the kind of gardener will bring his or her own perspective on success or failure of the crops. I may know about fruit, but I know little of leafy greens, so for me to say that the kale has earned a passing score would require some amount of guess work. Reflection works for the gardening metaphor, but the diversity required of P4C complicates it

because of the numerous perspectives. The manner in which I gauge the success of one type of crop versus another may be vastly different, and yet I cannot evaluate students differently—that would be unfair.

Overall, it seems that the gardening metaphor suffers from its own want of diversity. In order to engage with multiple perspectives, the garden gets cluttered and becomes immensely hard to take care of. Is this to suggest the impossibility of the gardening metaphor? Not at all. In fact, it would seem that it would be beneficial at higher academic levels, particularly in research classes. What about at the lower levels? Should we just dispose of the metaphor? I would venture to say that application of the gardening metaphor *is* possible. The quality of the gardener would have to be immense though. A master pedagogue with years of experience could accomplish this, I believe, at any level. I lack the skill to do so, but I have only taught for two years. I cannot say at what point a pedagogue would possess the ability to effectively implement the gardening metaphor in his or her classroom, but I am optimistic that this metaphor could be used, at least sometimes, to benefit philosophic education.

2.6 Friendship Metaphor

From this point, we shall examine less traditional models of the teacher-student relationship. Firstly, the model of the relationship could possibly be considered from the standpoint of friendship, or, as the case may be, Aristotelian friendship (i.e. *philia*). What does it mean to consider the classroom structure in terms of ‘friendship’? Broadly speaking, this would be the creation of equality in those who are to be ‘friends’. One should note that there are other views on friendship and that Aristotle has been chosen here for the sake of clarity and familiarity.

Before pressing forward, briefly, what is friendship? At least, what am I going to define friendship as? So far as Aristotle is concerned, friendship can be best summarized as such, “For friendship is a virtue, or involves virtue; and also it is one of the most indispensable requirements of life.”³⁷ Without digressing into a discussion on the virtue ethics of Aristotle, what can broadly be said here is that friendship involves those of similar habits or dispositions—in the case of Aristotle, these dispositions are moral, or virtuous, and, therefore, the friendship is had between two parties that are of reasonable moral standing. “The perfect form of friendship is that between the good, and those who resemble each other in virtue. For these friends wish each alike the other's good in respect of their goodness...”³⁸

So, if one is to consider friendship as a metaphor for the teacher-student relationship, then it follows that the teacher and the student have both reached a certain point of moral or intellectual development and are of similar, if not the same, disposition. The teacher would be less of a teacher in this model, but more of an equal. By operating within and as part of the class *as student* the inquiry will be driven in a different manner. The class will be driven in a communal manner, towards agreed and allied goals. However, this is not to say that the classroom setting will be completely non-traditional in its operation. In fact, the teacher would still maintain some authority, but this authority is also *with* the students. For, as the Greek conception of friendship goes, friends do not simply let their friends do whatever they wish, but, rather, as seen in Plato, “This is the way, Hippothales, in which you should talk to your favorite, humbling and reducing him, instead of puffing him up and spoiling him, as you do now...”³⁹ In the humbling and checking, one is able to prevent and control their friends, not through malicious means, but out of good

³⁷ Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. 1155a., Translated by Terence Irwin. Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 2007.

³⁸ NE., 1156b

³⁹ Plato, *Lysis*. 210e

wants for their friend or loved one. The community, as it were, is able to enforce itself from within.

This sense of community, if we are to consider this idealized form of friendship, is exactly what P4C seems to be trying to facilitate. Tokens such as the community ball and the circle in which the class sits, all of these things create a friendly and, importantly, safe community. Additionally, as stated above, the authority resides not within just the teacher, but within the students as well. For to be friends is to be humbling. If the environment is one that is intellectually safe, then this checking and humbling should come naturally, for it will be understood that it is done out of love and friendship.

Inquiry, by virtue of the structure of the community, benefits because of the communal virtue and drive towards a common goal. However, there is a need for the conversation to start. P4C thankfully provides the tools for this with the Plain Vanilla exercise.⁴⁰ Questions and discussion are generated within the community for the purpose of bettering what the community values or wishes to talk about. Overall, it seems as if the friendship metaphor, so long as the group is truly ‘friends’ will maintain a strong community and, by extension, strong method of inquiry, so long as someone has a starting point.

While previously only ‘humbling’ and ‘checking’ have been discussed, the case for friendship seems to be more beneficial because friends, in addition to their policing of actions, will also support and goad their friends to succeed and continue. The friendship model allows for curiosity to flourish amongst true friends, for they will inspire each other and drive each other to new heights. Philosophy, often occurring through dialogue, flourishes in the safe and communal environment developed by this friendship model.

⁴⁰ See Jackson or Makaiau.

The process of reflection is often considered as something occurring after the fact rather than a continuous process that occurs alongside inquiry and discussion. Within the friendship metaphor, it seems that the reflection will occur constantly, for friends are constantly seeking to better each other. The humbling and checking, as well as the goading and encouraging, act as the reflection. However, this may get ‘away’ from those who try to implement it. Intellectual safety may be diminished by the zeal of one who wishes to ‘humble’, or a rather poor idea may be puffed up by encouragement. Thankfully for the friendship metaphor, there are numerous people engaged in the process and where one may encourage, others may humble. This could result in a fragmentation of the community if the ideals are not aligned for. A difference in opinion, if deeply rooted, may show how the ‘friends’ of the ‘friendship’ are actually incompatible as friends.

The friendship metaphor definitely seems to be something P4C is aiming at, and, in its idealized state, it is. However, I find that the friendship model may require too much from too many. It is a lofty goal. Aristotle even goes so far as to put it as a condition for achieving *eudaimonia*. Additionally, he makes a point to differentiate between several types of friendship. With classes reaching twenty or thirty students, these different types are sure to manifest. Friendships of utility, i.e. students taking the class for mere requirement means, and friendships of pleasure, students taking the class because they ‘like’ the professor or their classmates, are not engaging in the idealized model of friendship set forth by Aristotle and other Greeks. Rather, the class may have ‘friendship’ but the fragmentation of the community is going to occur because of the different reasons someone has to be there. Friendships are, by nature, voluntary. Even with the most loving and virtuous teacher, the idealized friendship with the class will only occur when the class itself decides to engage in it. While not impossible, this lofty ideal of friendship is not the typical

understanding of friendship in the current era of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. It would seem that, on paper, the friendship model of the teacher-student relationship is exactly what P4C is striving for, but it is an idealized model. The number of students and the reality of current social practices seem to be at odds with the goals set forth by the P4C pillars.

2.7 Conclusions on Metaphors so Far

These metaphors are just a sampling of many more. I chose these because of their explicit or implicit use in modern western educational practices. By using the Four Pillars of P4C to examine them as viable tools with regard to their use in P4C we can make some conclusions about the nature of these metaphors and P4C's standards. First of all, no metaphor will perfectly encapsulate the needs of P4C in a way that would be admissible by all P4C practitioners. The pillars themselves seem to provide a immensely useful framework for understanding how particular metaphors for teaching may actually work. This is not to say that the Four Pillars are infallible, often times students will surprise in good and bad ways. For theory crafting though, I fail to think of a better, current, tool for assessing viable courses of pedagogic action. It would seem that most of the issues I have examined end up relating to the community and the causes of wonderment in students. The community's formation, and its actions with regard to its enforcement of intellectual safety, are of the utmost concern. How do we create a community that is equally free *and* safe? A careful balance of power is needed, it would seem. The ability for the teacher to maintain safety is key, but the manner in which they do so differs based on the metaphor of teaching currently employed. On the other hand, there seems to be some aspects of the pillar of philosophy that have arisen. The source of wonderment with regard to one's past, and present is of particularly note. Where one is from, how they view themselves, and the non-self-controlled

aspects of their life influence their curiosities and wonders. All these various factors influence the intellectual climate that an individual finds his or herself in, and these factors influence the communal bonds, and understandings of custom, culture, and taste, in the same vein. In seeking to understand the nuances of intellectual community formation, we can better understand not just how the pillars of P4C work, but, also, we can improve upon these pillars by focusing our energies towards this or that pillar.

Chapter 3: The Rhapsode Metaphor

We often tell stories while we teach. These anecdotes, whether or not they are totally relevant, make one class different from another. The pedagogues' personal experiences bring a unique flavor to the classroom. Perhaps these stories are life experiences that illustrate some point regarding the lesson being learned, or perhaps they are purely tangential. In either case, this personalizing of the material allows students to form unique memories about the course material. However, our understanding of these stories seems to be limited to the anecdotal life-experiences of the pedagogue. I believe this should not be the case, particularly with philosophy.

Consider the rhapsode, as described in the *Ion*. He or she is an interpreter of interpreters. The rhapsode is not the origin of the story, but rather he or she is merely a vessel for delivering it. The proficiency of a rhapsode lies in the ability to *tell the story*. This is just not the dry recitation of a poem, or the articulation of some historical account. The rhapsode succeeds at his or her task when they are able to relate the story to the particular audience that they are engaged with. It is not just *what* the rhapsode speaks of, but *who* they are speaking to. The rhapsode is, after all, the interpreter of interpreters. In understanding one's audience, be they children, statesmen, or soldiers home from war, the manner in which a person like Ion relays the words of Homer is going

to fluctuate. To engage the audience, to inspire them with wonder, or fear, requires knowing something about what is valued by the audience. For Ion and the Greeks, ideals such as courage and loyalty may be exemplified for the youth in order to inspire similar qualities, while on the other hand, qualities such as patience and diplomacy, which may bore the rambunctious youth, will likely engage the politically inclined. The ‘story’ has not changed, at least in the sense that nothing new is added, but the rendition of the qualities that are of interest may be altered. The focus on this or that subject, the dwelling on the particular scene that causes wide-eyed wonder, is chosen based on the audience’s inclinations. The rhapsode is no mere storyteller, they engage with, and weave new colors into the story, pointing out moments of interest, and passing over others; all based on the inclinations, and attitudes of the audience. Simply put, in telling a story, the rhapsode delivers an interpretation, not based on his or her own feelings regarding a topic, but based on the feelings, wants, and needs of the audience—the interpretation is *for* them.

As teachers of philosophy, it is only rarely that we give our *own* ideas on the matter. What I have to say regarding aesthetics may be interesting, but is it important? Not for a class I may be teaching. I care little if my students can articulate *my* views on a subject. My own opinion on the matter is of little concern when I consider the traditional goals of a class. I care more about whether or not they can *think* about aesthetics, and *discuss*. Staying with the ‘teaching’ of aesthetics, which theories do I put forth for my students? Are learning Kant’s theories regarding judgment the mark of a ‘A’ student? What about Chinese aesthetic theory? While in a Western classroom, and culture, surely the comparison is useful. It is not just the idea that one ought learn these theories for the sake of memorization, but it is because they, in their difference, inspire conversations about comparative aesthetic theory. To put it another way, the aesthetic theory itself, regardless of who it is from, is typically not brought up in a philosophy class room because

a learned student of philosophy *knows* what so-and-so said. Rather it is brought up for what comes after having read and experienced the work—the curiosity of further conversation. If students are to be encouraged to think critically, if they are to ‘learn’ how to think, then it would seem that encouraging rote memorization of this or that theory is the wrong way to conduct class. Rather, discussions on ‘what is beauty?’ are the types of things that we seem to want in the philosophy classroom.

The rhapsode, like the philosophy teacher, is not so concerned about the particulars of what is being said. They are concerned with how the audience is reacting to it. In interpreting Homer, the rhapsode may inspire thought about the nature of the Gods, and their relations to mortals. In interpreting Kant, the philosopher may inspire thoughts about what it means to be the judge of something. The relation here is rooted first in the ignorance of both professions, and second in their respective abilities to interpret a particular kind of work. What is said is not the rhapsode’s story, and what is said is not the pedagogue’s philosophy. Rather it is in their respective abilities to convey another’s ideas in such a way that the audience, or the class, may be inspired in some way or another. In being the interpreter of interpreters, both succeed in their tasks in a unique way. They are able to tailor the story to their audience. Understanding the audience is key here, and this requires engagement. In teaching, seeing what topics interest students is a manner of observation. Consider the rather popular practice of reading questions. After reading a text, students come to class with two to three questions. In sharing, a pedagogue can begin to see if there is some concord with regard to a particular point. The *focus* of the discussion, or the story, is not up to the pedagogue, or rhapsode, but it is the decision of the students, or audience. Understanding this allows for one to tailor the continuation of the story or lecture in such a way as to be illustrative of the focal points.

The works chosen for class are the poems chosen for the audience. What myths and stories the rhapsode shares are akin to the passages and essays that we, as teachers of philosophy, assign. Why are they chosen? They are chosen for their ability to inspire ideas of some kind. While the choice is obviously influenced somewhat by the one who is doing the telling, the goal is still to encourage thought. Consider aesthetics again. In choosing Plato, Kant, and Hume, I am narrowing the possible focus of my audience, while they can take diverse things out of these three, there *are* other works regarding aesthetics. The picking and choosing of the stories we tell and the lectures we give influence how the discussion can play out. If the goal of P4C is having a diverse discussion amongst peers, then it seems that the topics presented, or told, would have to exhibit some kind of diversity. To reiterate, this metaphor of the rhapsode focuses on the ability for the pedagogue to encourage thought and discussion via the choice and articulation of particular works. Who the stories come from and what they are is of secondary importance, what matters is the ability for these stories to encourage some spark of curiosity about the broader subject area.

3.1 Evaluation

It would be unfair to not subject this rhapsode metaphor to the same criteria as the previous metaphors. However, when thinking this metaphor out it was not constructed with the explicit intent of working with the Four Pillars. Rather it was constructed based on the idea that inspired students will engage in discussion, and this will facilitate P4C ideals. While I find myself working in a similar manner to this metaphor in my own pedagogical experience, actually implementing it within a P4C situation has yet to be done on account of the time constraints placed on the curriculum.

The pillar of community finds itself in a rather odd place. On one hand, the community of listeners, of inquirers, is well formed. They listen together and discuss together, after all. However, there may be an issue regarding the position of the teacher-rhapsode. While the story-teller, this position confers no real authority, at least if the position is to be taken literally. Without some form of authority, it would prove problematic enforcing intellectual safety. While the inquirers could, of course, maintain intellectual safety on their own, the onus of the task, as illustrated by both Jackson and Makaiau, sometimes falls upon the teacher. The story-teller has no ‘authority’ over the class, at least in the traditional sense of power. However, order and safety can be maintained with the refraining of future tales and stories. The story-teller is under no obligation to *continue* if the audience has become hostile and unsafe, in one manner or another. Another way of looking at it is the fact that the story itself may be changed. A class that has become unsafe, may not be *forced* by their teacher-rhapsode to become safe, but a story, or a discussion from the teacher-rhapsode regarding listening and empathy could be had. Not only does this help maintain safety, but it does so in such a way that the safety is generated from the discussion *on safety*. The teacher-rhapsode in no way is saying “no, thou mustn’t”, but rather paints a picture with his or her own words describing the unsafe situation in such a way as to prompt a response regarding the classroom’s environment. Intellectual safety in this community would have to be shown, rather than told. Despite this, the community is not perfect. The teacher-rhapsode and the student-audience are separated to start. There is a story-teller, and there are listeners. This does not conflict with P4C methods however. The Plain Vanilla example is, quite literally, what I am describing, at least in essence. A reading, a video, a lecture, or some manner of presentation is given, it being chosen for its ability to inspire conversation, and then discussion is had. So the

difference between teacher-rhapsode, and student-audience is not necessarily ideal, but it maintains the parts of the community that seem to be of particular value. The two players are not the same, but they are, at all times, equals.

Inquiry is encouraged at all steps of the rhapsode metaphor. The goal of the stories told is to elicit questions and commentary from the student-audience. When I talk about something such as Plato's Allegory of the Cave, I am not very concerned whether or not my students can re-iterate it to me. Asking them to draw me a map of the cave and its inhabitants would make sure my students know the story, but I am more concerned about what *they* think of it. What questions about knowledge do they have? Do they agree with truth being Justified True Belief? The whole reason the story was told was for inquiry's sake.

Thought experiments are a rather useful tool here. Consider trolley cases in ethics. These are told as stories with the explicit intent of facilitating a discussion on ethics. The resolution of the story is left vague, for to do so is to allow room for discussion and debate. The manner in which a teacher-rhapsode illustrates trolley-like cases, and his or her knowledge of the different variations of them, allows for different expanded conversations tailored toward the particular ethical inclinations of the student-audience. For example, in my own classroom I start with the traditional example of the trolley case, but after the fact, especially when my students find that sacrificing the one worker to save the many is best, I present them with a variation in which one healthy person could be used to provide 'donor' organs for several others, and related philosophic stories that, to my students, typically encourage a rather empathic conversation about the needs of the many versus the needs of the few. Could this conversation succeed with just the usual trolley example? Of course it could, but by having access to other similar stories, which il-

illustrate related points, the conversation, and inquiry will benefit. Overall, it would seem that inquiry will happen to some degree. The quality of that inquiry is going to be influenced by the kinds of stories told to inspire it. Knowledge on different variations, on different cultural perspectives, the different *interpretations*, allow for an improved quality of inquiry. It seems to me that teacher-rhapsode has a high standard here. The student audience can only respond to the stories told, and if those stories are all rooted in Western Philosophy then the resulting inquiry will be skewed. Simply put, the diversity of inquiry depends not *just* on the diversity of the community, but also on the diversity of the stories. In this regard the rhapsode metaphor does not suggest success or failure, but rather puts forth a requirement for actualizing it in a P4C setting.

The pillar of philosophy is where this metaphor develops its strong points. In focusing here on the wonderment and curiosity found within philosophic discourse, it seems that a situation can be achieved in which P4C ideals are exalted. What does the student-audience wish to discuss? This is the main question for this metaphor. Anyone with philosophy classroom experience knows that figuring out what students *want* to actually talk about is no easy task. Between shyness, implicit concerns about intellectual safety, and concerns over things such as grades and attendance, figuring out talking points can be complicated. In forming a community that is safe, a few issues may be placated, but how does a teacher-rhapsode encourage discussion in spite of these issues? Plain Vanillas and reading reflections provide a source of inspiration to tailor a discussion, but these should not be relied on as the only tools. Rather, we have already discussed several different tools that seem to work in situational instances—the other metaphors. In understanding the other metaphors as tools, and using one’s position as interpreter of interpreters, a teacher-rhapsode is not limited in method. Rather he or she can inspire conversations in tacit ways.

Emulating the gardening metaphor, he or she could say that today is a day of group work. Emulating the midwife metaphor, he or she could engage in the traditional Socratic discourse so popular in philosophy. While this may not exactly work with the combat metaphor, it could still be implemented in minimal instances, ‘learning’ what Aristotle’s virtues are, or who wrote *Meditations on First Philosophy*. These seem to be important, but only in a more historical and secondary sense. As a teacher-rhapsode, one would be much more concerned about what is said within the *Meditations*, and what we can say about virtue ethics in the modern day and age. The method of the rhapsode metaphor is rather paradoxical, as it finds no identity of its own. Rather it interprets other metaphors, other thinkers, other intellectual works and returns that interpretation to his or her students in such a way that they can be ‘inspired’ to talk about this or that topic.

Necessarily, the teacher-rhapsode enters the class with very little in regard to a strict plan. Instead, there are general ideas of this or that story in philosophy that may be interesting, but which of those is brought out, and discussed is all up to the student-audience.

Reflection, while not the pillar this metaphor was built around, is of the utmost importance. Learning what methods of story-telling⁴¹ ‘work’ and which do not is an important task for the teacher-rhapsode. How is this accomplished? The teacher-rhapsode’s reflection is done through the reflection of the student-audience. In evaluating whether or not they have maintained the classroom ‘rules’, or the tenets of P4C, the class will inevitably discuss how well they discussed a particular topic. Here the teacher-rhapsode listens. He or she sees what the students thought about their performance, bearing in mind his or her own reasons for starting the discussion. Perhaps the discussion went in a vastly different direction than anticipated, or perhaps it was rather boring. Understanding what topic or prompt elicits what kind of responses is useful

⁴¹ read as ‘lecturing’.

for future discussions, and future classes. Ultimately, the class asks themselves whether or not they, in the view of P4C philosophy, discussed the topic well, and the pedagogue asks his or herself whether or not his or her interpretation of a given prompt worked as intended, worked but in an unanticipated way, or if his or her interpretation was vastly different than that of the class to such an extent that it was detrimental to the conversation.

Overall it seems that this metaphor may work well. However, despite developing it myself, the first word I think of when I want to describe it is ‘loose’. On one hand, this was intended, the structure, or lack thereof, was intended. Perhaps this metaphor could be best understood as a scaffold from which other metaphors, and pedagogic methods can be implemented to an extent. On the other hand, it is vague. What has this metaphor *actually* put forth? At the base level it says that a pedagogue interprets this or that subject matter for the sake of his or her students. This provides very little in itself in terms of a toolset. I would not give this to a new teacher and expect them to know what to do with it. Simply put, I would not prescribe this metaphor without adequate explanation. The rhapsode metaphor performs best when it has the understanding of *other* metaphors, and *how* they function in pedagogical context.

The issue I foresee some having, particularly those of a more traditional pedagogic mindset, is with the word interpretation. What does this word mean in the educational context? I can envision a situation in which one could make a claim to ‘interpreting’ by having his or her students listen to dry ‘interpretive’ lectures. This would just be the opinion of the teacher distilled through whatever the lecture is on. This does not seem to be what we mean by interpretation. Rather, I am presenting interpretation as the formation, or articulation, of this or that idea in a work in such a way that the ideas are presented in a contextually relevant way to the student-audience. Ultimately the rhapsode metaphor does seem to have some merit on its own, but is not without

flaw in the eyes of more traditional pedagogues. However, in relation to P4C, it seems to be a more than viable ‘method’ of operating.

3.2 Notes on the Rhapsode

What are the implications of such a theory of education? This is not just asking about P4C in general, but the rhapsode metaphor in particular. There are two aspects that I wish to briefly discuss. On one hand, while I briefly gave a curt definition of what I view to be ‘interpretation’, it would be beneficial to look at how hermeneutics works within education. On the other hand, there are more practical pedagogic concerns such as course materials and grading that should be addressed with regards to the rhapsode metaphor. Ultimately, these discussions aim at providing some level of support for both P4C and the rhapsode metaphor by illustrating how they work in relation to what we have been calling traditional pedagogy.

In looking at the relationship between hermeneutics and education, Shaun Gallagher stakes the following claim from which we will continue our inquiry, “critical hermeneutics, reproduction is not the conscious result of a methodological procedure of interpretation but, for the most part, an unconscious, unreflective transmission of the authority and power structures of tradition.”⁴² The issue of power and authority is a rather important area of P4C, the ability to maintain safety resides within the authority of the teacher, and, on the other hand, in order to be part of the community this authority must not alienate either student or teacher from the community. The implicit conveyance of kinds of power structures in our presentation of this or that philosophy is problematic, but the manner in which these topics are presented are also of note. In other words, our metaphors illustrate the power structures we are implicitly reproducing. Gallagher

⁴² Gallagher, Shaun. *Hermeneutics and Education*. Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1992.

says the following, “The relation between teacher and student seems to be precisely asymmetrical and to involve an authority-power structure. Power and tradition operate on the side of the teacher; the student is caught in a struggle between authority and autonomy.”⁴³ Yet these relations are only understood in the reflective light. In our critical examination of these metaphors, we have come to see the types of power structures, be they implicit or explicit, that are exhibited in the metaphors in question.

Gallagher proposes a modification on pedagogy which he calls ‘critical pedagogy’. This manner of education “begins with a reflective experience which provides two things: (a) ‘increased power of control’ and (b) increased meaning, ‘the experienced significance attached to an experience.’”⁴⁴ Gallagher here is moving away from the traditional power structures of education, namely the vertical teacher-student method. Rather, Gallagher wishes for a form of education that empowers the students in a way that allows for them to operate with a level of autonomy that may not otherwise be possible. How do we implement such a theory in actuality though? Such a theory would have to have a method of reflection built into it, in order to maintain itself. P4C answers this call with its pillars. In reflection, P4C pedagogy allows for the examination of what was just done to see if it influenced the community in some way. The students have their increased control. For it is with them that the discussion lies. Additionally, the students also have their increased meaning, the discussion was started by their want of it. It has some sort of relevance to their lives that other, forced topics do not have. By emulating the rhapsode, a pedagogue must be aware of their own situation—that they interpret. Interpreting this or that theory in a particular way inevitably says something about the pedagogue, and the awareness of this allows for improvement. In being aware of this transmission of ideas, the pedagogue can

⁴³ Gallagher, 251.

⁴⁴ Gallagher, 256.

gather from the critical reflection of the students-audience in the post-discussion what was actually accomplished. Did the method of delivering a particularly theory come with a side-effect? Was there some implicit power structure that was brought to light? P4C, with its Four Pillars, allows for these questions to be answered, at least in part. While the rhapsode metaphor is interpreting, it is not ignorant of this fact. Rather, it could be said that a teacher-rhapsode is critically interpreting the works and words of philosophers for the sake of achieving an intellectually safe, 'critical pedagogy'.

The relation between student and teacher can be looked at in another way that helps to illustrate the benefit of P4C and the rhapsode metaphor. Paulo Freire says the following on the matter, "To resolve the teacher-student contradiction, to exchange the role of depositor, proscriber, domesticator, for the role of student among students would be to undermine the power of oppression and serve the cause of liberation."⁴⁵ The rejection of the traditional 'banking model' of education is the main claim that Freire is making here. P4C operates on a similar rejection of the banking model. It is not the teacher 'telling' the students what matters, rather it is the dialogue that is had. Through such a dialogue, Freire adds, "the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with student-teachers."⁴⁶ The community is established in an, essentially, P4C manner. The creation of co-inquirers allows for P4C to be a viable educative method, for it is in the cooperation through dialogue that something educative is achieved. While not talking about P4C explicitly, Freire describes it in relation to its alternative, "Whereas banking education anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality."⁴⁷ He continues this line of

⁴⁵ Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos. New York: Continuum, 2000.

⁴⁶ Freire, 80.

⁴⁷ Freire, 81.

thought, “Education as the practices of freedom...denies that man is abstract, isolated, independent, and unattached to the world; it also denies that the world exists as the reality apart from people. *Authentic reflection considers neither abstract man nor the world without people, but people in their relations with the world.*”⁴⁸ P4C concerns itself with the community of inquirers and what matters to them. The dialogue is focused not on abstracts, or ideals, but, rather, it is mostly focused on mundane, day-to-day, philosophic issues that we have. Freire’s claim here works with P4C and the nature of interpretation painted by the rhapsode metaphor. It allows for the hermeneutic critical reflection that Gallagher puts forth, while attempting to remedy the student-teacher dichotomy by creating co-inquirers. While neither thinker speaks of Philosophy for Children, it seems clear that their overall goals are accomplished by the implementation of P4C pedagogy, and the rhapsode metaphor.

Despite being ‘non-traditional’, both P4C and the rhapsode metaphor find themselves in a traditional environment. This is the cause of tension. While the issues may be more complex than listed here, by looking briefly at what ought be included in a class on philosophy, i.e. ‘what is the course material’, and how one ought to grade, ‘how is performance evaluated’, we can see how P4C may still survive in this environment of traditional education.

A typical assignment given in a philosophy class is to read ‘x’ passage from ‘y’ author. This being said, what passages and authors make it into the curriculum? Let us consider reading in general for a moment. Looking at the words of Zhu Xi [Chu hsi], “Book learning is a secondary matter for students.”⁴⁹ Something rather profound is being said here. Reading is not a pri-

⁴⁸ Ibid. Emphasis added.

⁴⁹ Hsi, Chu. *Learning to Be a Sage: Selections from the Conversations of Master Chu, Arranged Topically*. Translated by Daniel K. Gardner. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000. 128.

mary concern, or, in other words, it is not valuable in itself. Rather one ought “Read books to observe the intentions of the sages and worthies. Follow the intentions of the sages and the worthies to observe natural principle.”⁵⁰ The intentions of the author are what of import here, not the rote memorization of particular words or phrases. What is *meant* is what is important, the manner in which it is said, what words employed, are of secondary import. This supports the ideas of the rhapsode metaphor by reiterating the idea that it is the interpretation and the discussion had from said interpretation that is meaningful. To illustrate the point, Chu Hsi provides a rather important note on reading and education:

Generally, in reading, students should keep to these three [dicta]: (1) read little but become intimately familiar with what you read; (2) don’t scrutinize the text, developing your own farfetched views of it, but rather reasonably experience it over and over again; and (3) concentrate fully, without thought of gain.”⁵¹

The key here is to understand the second dicta with regard to P4C. It is not suggesting one ought not critically think about his or her own ideas on a matter, but rather, to experience the views read. In experiencing, one is going to be having a dialogue. From this dialogue views can be formed, but not from the immediate reading of the text itself. Before moving on from Chu Hsi, one should note the following phrase for its particular relevance to our inquiry, “In reading, keep the curriculum small but the effort you make on it large.”⁵² Does this work though? Can we have a diverse curriculum while maintaining a small number of works? Perhaps this could be understood as a small number of topics.

⁵⁰ Hsi, 129

⁵¹ Hsi, 132.

⁵² Ibid.

There are countless places P4C can draw Plain Vanilla prompts from, even within the traditional philosophy 101 corpus of work. Trying to cover all subsets of philosophy may be overreaching. Rather, it behooves pedagogues to focus on two or three areas of particular interest for the class. In understanding the wants and concerns of students, perhaps the curriculum could be focused around epistemology and aesthetics if the class is so inclined. The teacher-rhapsode does this already, tailoring what is ‘taught’ to the student-audience. What works one semester may not during another. Likewise, having ‘one’ philosophy curriculum seems foolish, and yet, if the topics covered do not cater to everyone, then some may feel intellectually left out. Eventually, there needs to be some balance, but, if we are to use P4C practices, then the discussion, and what gets included, is decided by the community. I have yet to think of a way to strike this balance. Originally I considered having a vote on different areas of philosophy, but that would entail some background knowledge on them and what they entail. Curriculum and the Child were opposed to each other by Dewey, and it seems that there is still no definitive answer to remedy this split.

What of grading? The traditional assessment tool implemented by all the disciplines is one in which a pedagogue renders a letter which indicative of individual performance. The manner in which one grades typically reflects the values of the discipline at hand. An art history class, for example, may have an exam comprised of 50 images that need to be identified. This allows for one point to be assigned for the title of the work, and one for the author, or painter, for a total of 100 points. Philosophy clearly does not work in a similar way. As a discipline, philosophy is more concerned with the intellectual development of students, and the ability to critically think. How can we grade this? I am not asking about reflection here, that has already been discussed; but how can I, as a teacher of philosophy, give a grade that represents the performance of

my student? Dr. David Fenner asks a different questions, however, ‘Can one grade?’. To which his reply is as follows:

The answer? Perhaps the answer is to lay down grading in favor of whatever mechanism might accomplish the purposes hiding behind the grading. Is the purpose of grading to psychologically motivate the student toward greater learning by virtue of having students develop in themselves greater learning skills?⁵³

The answer to his second question is hard to answer but is key to this discussion. Who are the grades for? Are they for the student, or are they for the society that the student lives in? If they are for the student and the aim of grading is evaluating the growth of an individual, then it would follow that better grades would go to those who improve, while those who are stagnant receive grades that are less good. Yet some students have a good grasp of the material to begin with, so they may improve ‘less’ than a student who has never had the subject. Let us rephrase the question temporarily. Who are ‘good’ students in a philosophy class? Fenner provides his answer to the question saying, “My best students...these students work not because I hold grades over their heads. My best students work for the sheer joy of the work. I can point to student after student who now pursues such experiences for their own sake.”⁵⁴ I agree with this sentiment. While not as experienced as other teachers, I have seen that special kind of student who cares about the class not for the grade, but for the sheer enjoyment of philosophy. Philosophy for Children is sympathetic to these issues. It purposefully encourages meaningful conversations that are not underscored by a looming exam. Rather, P4C encourages the development of thought in a way that avoids the ‘pressure’ of grades, in my view. Working in the traditional education system means having to use grades on the letter scale. This is a bane to P4C, I feel, for it forces an evaluation

⁵³ Fenner, David E.W. "The Problem with Grading." In *Ethics and the Arts An Anthology*, edited by David E.W. Fenner. 1st ed. Routledge, 2014

⁵⁴ Ibid.

that is not necessarily beneficial to the conversation. If there is a worry about ‘saying something wrong’, then a student does not talk. Yet, on the other hand, if what is said has no bearing on the ‘grade’, then one could be overly talkative, or even *more quiet*. I believe the issue of grading in the traditional system is incompatible with P4C ideals. P4C clearly does evaluate, but it does so in a different way than traditional classes. So it would seem the final question I cannot answer is this: can these evaluations be translated between each other?

Traditional pedagogic practices are at odds with P4C methodologies. I am unsure how to remedy this difference. It seems the issues separating the two methods are rooted in social views of education, and if that is so, the answer to finding a way to have these ideas work together would be social in nature—an answer which I am not prepared to pretend to know the. I will let that task fall to someone else. P4C and the rhapsode metaphor work well together, but the lack of interaction between P4C and the traditional school environment illustrates some complications that could arise. Implementing P4C is not an easy task, but the first step is the hardest. Moving away from traditional pedagogy allows for the best qualities of P4C to flourish.

Conclusion:

The philosophy of education is complicated. The differences between different pedagogical practices seem insurmountable. With the traditional, banking model of education on one hand, and Philosophy for Children in the other, we are presented with vastly different approaches to one of the most important aspects of social life. In looking at the history of philosophic education we begin to see how these differences arise out of a special kind of relationship. The student-teacher relationship is understood, for the most part, metaphorically. In looking at the origin of some popular metaphors we see what values they try to implicitly and explicitly instill in their

students. The power relation between teacher and student is displayed, and the particulars of ‘what matters’ are illustrated more clearly when examined in depth. By using the Four Pillars of Philosophy for Children one has a method with which one can evaluate different metaphors. How well these metaphors work within the system of P4C is influenced by the pillars of Community, Inquiry, Philosophy, and Reflection. Some metaphors fared better in one pillar or another, some fail across the board. The intent here is to show how some metaphors may illustrate better ways of engaging with a community of co-inquirers than others.

The rhapsode metaphor, finding its origin in the *Ion*, is what I would claim works best for how I understand P4C. In interpreting the interpreters, a teacher-rhapsode puts themselves in a position with little authority. The teacher-rhapsode is there to inspire the conversation amongst the community, and to tailor its particulars to the wants and needs of a diverse student-audience. By implementing the other metaphors in a situational way, the rhapsode can wear many faces—*all for the sake of his or her students*. This amorphous quality is its great boon and bane. The lack of clear rules and methods allows it to be free from restrictions, but makes it immensely hard to ‘pick up’ and use casually.

Working this metaphor into traditional pedagogy in the vessel of P4C seems unlikely. The differences between the traditional pedagogues and P4C pedagogues in terms of curriculum and grading make mutual cooperation tricky. The solution to this problem may be to work together in a P4C type of manner, but the solution could also just as likely be enforcing a method of controllable pedagogy. Either would work, but the latter seems philosophically abhorrent. Only through critical examination of our educational and social practices regarding education

can we find a better way to encourage discussion and dialogue. The first step on the path to educational betterment, as a whole, is the simple task of talking to one another in a safe and critical way—a task that has seemed to allude traditional teachers for some time.

Bibliography

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Terence Irwin. Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett, 2007.

Butnor, Ashby. "Critical Communities: Intellectual Safety and the Power of Disagreement." *Educational Perspectives: Journal of the College of Education* 44, no. 1&2 (2012): 29-32.

- Dewey, John. *The Child and the Curriculum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1902.
https://archive.org/stream/childandcurricul00deweuoft/childandcurricul00deweuoft_djvu.txt.
- Dewey, John. "Democracy and Education." Project Gutenberg. July 26, 2008. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/852/852-h/852-h.htm>.
- Fenner, David E.W. "The Problem with Grading." In *Ethics and the Arts An Anthology*, edited by David E.W. Fenner. 1st ed. Routledge, 2014.
- Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Translated by Myra Bergman Ramos. New York: Continuum, 2000.
- Gallagher, Shaun. *Hermeneutics and Education*. Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1992.
- Hsi, Chu. *Learning to Be a Sage: Selections from the Conversations of Master Chu, Arranged Topically*. Translated by Daniel K. Gardner. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000.
- Jackson, Thomas E. "The Art and Craft of 'Gently Socratic' Inquiry." In *Developing Minds: A Resource Book for Teaching Thinking*, edited by Arthur L. Costa. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development, VA, 2001.
- Makaiau, Amber Strong, PhD. *Philosophical Inquiry Curriculum Guide*. January 2014. Pedagogical Guideline
- Mattice, Sarah A. *Metaphor and Metaphilosophy*. S.I.: Lexington Books, 2017.
- Mengzi. "Gaozi." Translated by James Legge. In *The Works of Mencius*. Clarendon, 1985.
<http://ctext.org/mengzi/gaozi-i>.
- Mengzi. "Gong Sun Chou." In *The Works of Mencius*, translated by James Legge. Clarendon, 1985. <http://ctext.org/mengzi/gong-sun-chou-i>.
- Plato. "Ion." Translated by Lane Cooper. In *The Collected Dialogues of Plato: Including the Letters*, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Plato. "Lysis." Translated by J. Wright. In *The Collected Dialogues of Plato: Including the Letters*, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Plato. "Theaetetus." Translated by F. M. Cornford. In *The Collected Dialogues of Plato: Including the Letters*, edited by Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2009.